

BANDWAGON

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2010

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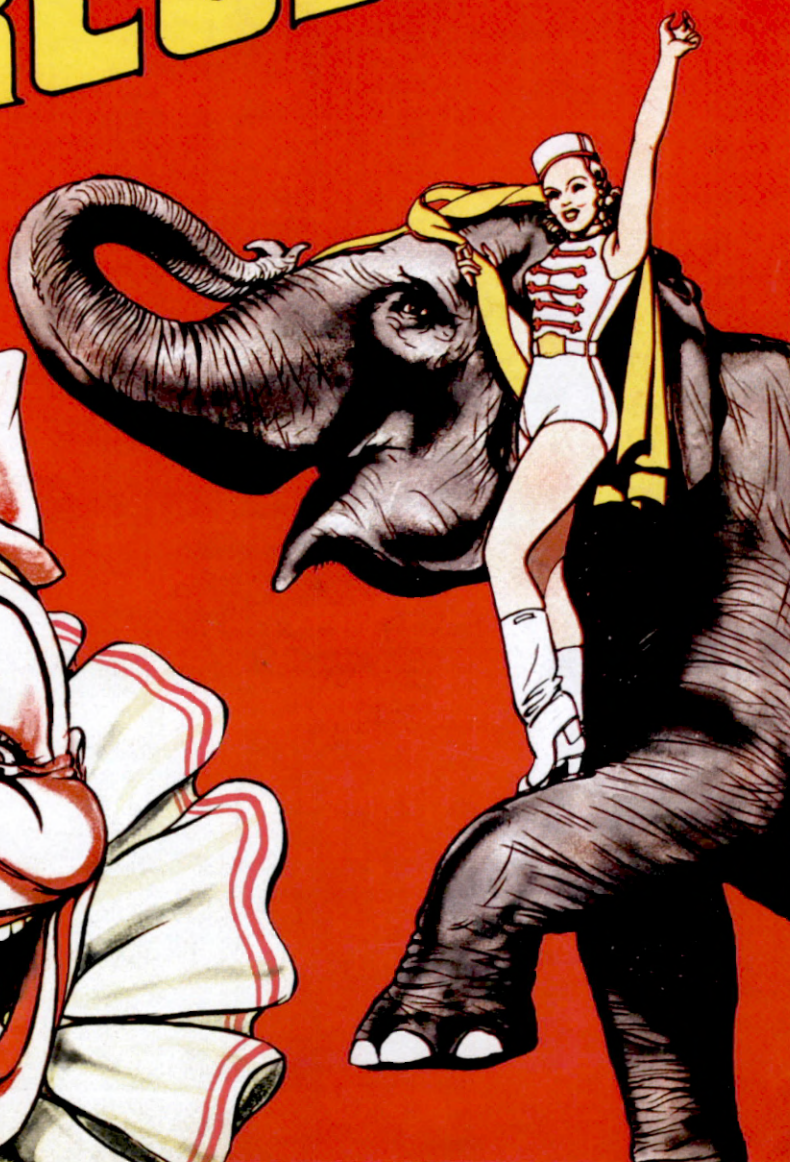
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BANDWAGON

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THE FRONT COVER

Sylvester "Buster" Cronin managed the A.G. Barnes Circus under Ringling ownership in the 1930s. In 1938 he managed the Col. Tim McCoy Wild West Show.

He toured Cronin Bros. Circus in 1944 and 1945. This 1945 program cover was drawn by artist Forrest Free-land, who was also general agent of the show.

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CHAOS AT WINTER QUARTERS:

Beatty's Crew Slaughtered Liberty Horses to Feed Big Cats

By Lane Talburt

PART ONE

Stranded on the site of a former World War II training base in the southern stretches of New Mexico's Upper Chihuahuan desert, a skeleton crew of circus laborers strived to carry out assigned chores under conditions that could only be described as abnormal, if not bizarre.

This was the summer of 1956, and the workmen should have been on the road, supporting twice-daily performances of the Clyde Beatty Circus. Instead, they were encamped at Beatty's winter quarters in Deming, a scant 30 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border. The show's 15-car train had been sitting empty on a rail spur inside the decommissioned base since mid-May. The circus was broke, and its famous owner was fighting to keep his name on the marquee.

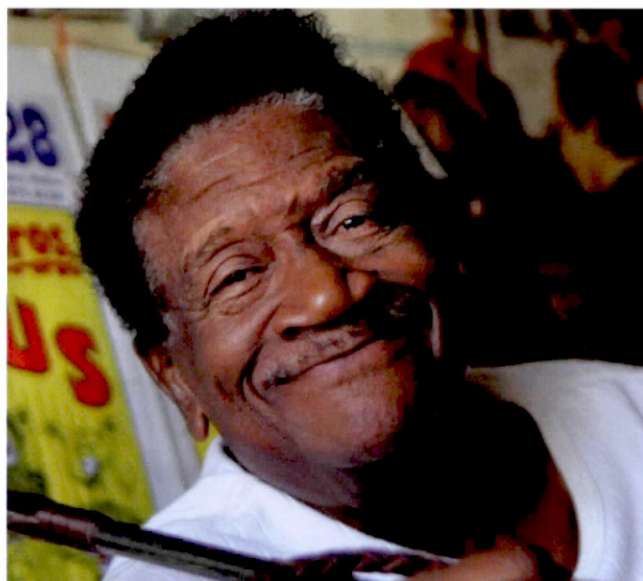
Isolated from the nearby village of some 3,500 residents and unaware of the impending auction of the circus's assets, the workers were struggling to feed themselves and the animals left in their care—19 lions and tigers, eight elephants, 12 horses, a dozen ponies and a small assortment of other menagerie animals.

Water was plentiful, thanks to aquifer-fed wells which made cattle raising and cotton farming feasible in this arid region.

The Beatty ticket wagon in 1956. All illustrations are from the Pfening Archives unless otherwise credited.



Unfortunately, a more precious commodity—horse meat for the owner's big cats—had been exhausted, and purveyors were not about to extend credit to the bankrupt circus. To put food on the cookhouse tables, Beatty's teenage cage boy, Manuel Ruffin, and several other laborers had taken jobs at a nearby cotton compress.



A recent photo of Manuel "Junior" Ruffin. Photo by Dan Wagner, Sarasota *Herald Tribune*.

Basically, while the working men had been left to fend for themselves, their esprit de corps remained high. "We were all dedicated to our jobs at winter quarters," Ruffin recalled more than a half century later. "We didn't know the situation, but we knew we had jobs to do."

All pretense of normalcy collapsed with a single long distance phone call.

"The mood really changed when Beatty sent the word to start destroying the liberty horses—kill them to feed the cats. That changed everything."

Junior was already proficient in cutting up horse meat sections. Now, out of desperation, Ruffin found himself being drawn into the crude slaughtering process. "We butchered two or three horses every other week," Ruffin said. "Buzzards took care of the carcasses."

By the time the dust had settled in the three-month struggle for circus ownership, the liberty act—the same group of

palomino and sorrel horses formerly presented in the center ring by Captain Johnny Cline--had been decimated. Only three or four of the well trained and groomed horses survived, Ruffin said.

Beatty's show was not the only one to fold during the summer of 1956. Floyd King and Arnold Maley also were forced into bankruptcy, and John Ringling North pulled the plug on the Ringling Bros. canvas era, citing insurmountable union conflicts.

The collapse of the Beatty circus and then its resurgence as the only show on rails—at least for the remainder of 1956--has been well documented in pages of *Billboard* and *Bandwagon*.

Murky then, and just as muddled today, are details surrounding the negotiations that allowed two former Ringling managers—Frank McCloskey and Walter Kernan—to outwit their former boss—Art Concello-- and take undisputed control of the moribund show.

To gain a better understanding of the pivotal moment, however, requires casting a broader historical net. By extending the research perimeters to include the 1930s and 1940s, the author was able to untangle some of the complexities of Beatty's previous business relationships. The names of four key investors emerged: Concello, McCloskey, Kernan, and Frank Walter Jr., a Houston millionaire who collected circus wagons as a hobby. Each propped up Beatty's circus ventures at different times during the 1940s and 1950s.

A search of the Internet produced hundreds of related newspaper articles dating back to the early 1920s when Beatty was establishing his reputation as a featured performer.

Also invaluable were interviews with two close Beatty associates—Ruffin and Johnny Pugh, owner of Cole Bros. Circus. Both were among an elite group of circus veterans inducted into the Ring of Fame in Sarasota on January 17, 2010. Bronze plaques on St. Armand's Circle mark their accomplishments, along with those of four other big-top legends: flyer Tony Steele; Tino Wallenda, patriarch of the Flying Wallendas; Rudy and Sue Lenz, whose chimp act was a feature on the Big One; and the Dime Wilsons, whose offspring have expanded the family's circus footprints.

Ruffin, the first African-American to be so honored, was at Beatty's side during much of the Deming saga. Though he "stuck out like a sore thumb" on the circus lot, he was virtually "invisible" to the participants in heated discussions inside his mentor's private wagon. Ruffin painted a robust picture of life at winter quarters and on tour.

Pugh was Frank McCloskey's go-to manager on the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. show during the final years of the wild animal trainer's career. McCloskey passed on his version of the 1956 takeover in late-night conversations with Pugh, who bought the show in late 1981.

The Valusia County fairground at DeLand, Florida, has been the circus's off-season home since late 1956, when the Beatty-Cole train pulled into the enclosed compound for the last time. Chain link fences around the site protect the cir-

cus's physical investment. The enclosures serve an equally important function: keeping outsiders at arm's length. What happens inside usually stays there.

In the early 1950s, the relative isolation of the decommissioned Deming airbase made it an ideal candidate as a circus winter quarters. The wild animal trainer could have just as easily relocated elsewhere.

Why Deming

If you were a circus owner and somebody offered you the use of a wintering spot for \$5 a year, wouldn't you grab at it? In 1953 Clyde Beatty did.

A lengthy courtship between the subjugator of wild beasts and officials of the Village of Deming came to the attention of Deming *Headlight* readers in 1952. During a one-day stand on September 24, Beatty left the dirt lot on the northwest side of town just long enough to make a spot tour of a few buildings at the sprawling military installation, situated some three miles east of Deming.

The fenced wartime facility offered spacious, well-maintained hangars with adjoining paved aprons, a combination bunk-cookhouse, and, of course, the dedicated rail spur off the east-west Southern Pacific line, with a direct switch to the Santa Fe in the Deming rail yards.

One of the hangars came equipped with stalls; the building was used to exhibit animals during the annual Tri-State Fair. A barracks building was tailor-made to accommodate working men and contained a separate kitchen and dining area. On the heels of his inspection, the local newspaper reported that "the circus and famous animal-act figure appeared impressed at the site.



Liberty horses being worked by Malonga Cline at the Deming winter quarters. The barn in back was leased by Beatty. His steel arena is at right of the building. Darrell Hawkins collection.

"Details of any proposal will have to be worked out with the fair association and Village in the next couple of weeks and be submitted to Beatty," the report stated. "A similar proposal had been advanced several years ago but nothing ever came of it."

Landing the circus, civic boosters hoped, would boost the small town's economy and viability as a tourist destination.

A severe drought in the region was forcing many ranchers to prematurely ship sizeable numbers of cattle to market. To most travelers, Deming was a rather nondescript community straddling two major highways: U.S. 70, the modern-day Interstate 10, stretching from New Orleans through El Paso and on to Los Angeles; and U.S. 80, giving access to Albuquerque and other towns to the north.

Long before those concrete strands were completed, Deming was already the junction point of two major railroad lines. In 1881, the tiny community was the site of the link-up that brought the nation its second intercontinental rail route, the Southern Pacific line. Local historians are unable to pinpoint the spot where officials drove a commemorative silver spike, which has long since disappeared. The Santa Fe Railroad (now BNSF) also ran a line into Deming, providing a northern route for cattlemen and cotton growers in the region. During World War II, the government authorized construction of a link into the army facility. Three spurs inside the base enabled the Army to handle larger volumes of arriving and departing soldiers, who were being trained as bombardiers.

Previous Beatty Quarters

That Beatty was partial to fairgrounds is evident from reviewing the list of his winter quarters sites since the cat trainer converted his circus to rails in 1945.

1945-46 El Paso, Texas (fairgrounds)

1946-47 Nacogdoches, Texas (fairgrounds)

1947-48 and 1951-52 Shreveport, Louisiana (fairgrounds).

1948-49 and 1949-50 El Monte, California

Beatty's winter quarters at El Monte was the former site of Gay's Lion Farm. Any sentimental value of this acreage was far outweighed by its strategic location in the burgeoning Los Angeles area, traditionally the most lucrative market for any West Coast-based circus.



Harriett and Clyde Beatty in 1949.

In 1952, when Beatty's show made its Deming stand, the circus train was en route to a new wintering site in Newhall, California. This Santa Clarita Valley community was just up the road from Thousand Oaks, where the famous lion trainer had acquired numerous lions and tigers for his act at Louis Goebel's wild animal farm (later renamed Jungland).

The clincher, according to a San Bernadino newspaper report on October 2, 1952, may have been that "Beatty, who contemplated wintering in the Redlands area for a time, finally selected winter quarters at Newhall as being closer to his winter work making movies in Hollywood."

Newhall also was smack in the middle of outdoor shooting locales favored by motion picture makers. And Beatty was no stranger to Hollywood sound stages, where he starred in his first picture, *The Big Cage* in 1933 and the subsequent serial *The Lost Jungle*.

The circus owner must have seen the potential of the New Mexico air base as a motion picture back lot. Indeed, the Deming newspaper account following his visit indicated that Beatty "would work out new acts during the winter layoffs and possibly shoot movie scenes and television pictures" at the installation.

Surely the rail spur leading into the proposed new winter quarters location would have been a considerably more decisive factor. (Neither Newhall nor El Monte offered that direct access.) Encouraged by Beatty's initial favorable impression, city fathers took the initiative to improve the track bed for rails leading into the base, as well as the three-fingered spurs.

Because Deming was an important rail junction and because it served a large trade area, the small town established a reputation dating back to the late 1800s as a good place to set up the big top. Among the early rail outfits that pulled into the arid community for one-day stands were Walter L. Main (1897), Barnum and Bailey (1906 and 1912); Ringling Bros. (1913) and Hagenbeck-Wallace (1919). Following on the heels of the last circus, Al G. Barnes intended to set up there on November 8. The resulting fiasco exposed Deming's Achilles heel to future circus route planners, as reported in the *Headlight* on November 14, 1919: "Last Saturday dawned bright and fair and every prospect for an ideal circus day was in evidence until just about the time when the Al G. Barnes aggregation of trained animals and performers reached Deming. But the hopes of everyone, spectators and circus men, were doomed to disappointment. Just as the animals were being unloaded from the trains and the razorbacks were preparing to raise the tents, one of the wind storms that are so well known in this section of the state came along and knocked all chance of a proper circus performance galley west. The circus men fought for hours trying to get the big tops up in the face of the wind and the driving sands, but it was not until late in the evening that they were in position to give even a part of the show. Some of the side shows were able to get their canvas up and to attract a few sightseers, but by supper time the majority of those who had made up their minds to attend the circus had become resigned to the inevitable and had decided to take in the moving picture shows."

The weather must have been balmy in the fall of 1952 when the Beatty show set up on a dusty lot north in Deming's business district. Among those attending both performances to witness the trainer's heroic efforts was a newly-married Delores Ruebush (now Mrs. Darrell Hawkins). It came as a surprise when Deloris spotted the circus owner at a reception several years later and discovered that Beatty stood only 5 feet six inches both in and out of the steel arena.

It's likely that the performer's third wife, Jane, and their

toddler, Clyde Jr., were on the circus train at Deming, but not on the lot—Jane has no desire to see her husband putting life and limb at risk twice daily. Beatty and his first spouse, Ernestine, were divorced in 1931, at Peru, Indiana, where he was wintering with Hagenbeck-Wallace. In 1933 he exchanged vows with Harriet Evans, 24, an aspiring aerialist on that show. With her Clyde's tutoring, Harriet presented an act that thrilled fans for more than a decade—a tiger riding on the back of an elephant. She succumbed to a heart ailment in May 1950 while the circus was on tour in Mississippi. In late 1951 Beatty married Jane Abel, a New Orleans nightclub singer-comedienne, whom he met during his circus's winter layover in Shreveport.

Trainer's New Protege

Always seeking to attract the public's eye during the off season, the Beatty publicity machine regurgitated an old ploy for a February 1953 release by the International News Services to its media outlets: "NEWHALL, Calif.--(INS)—Clyde Beatty, claw-scarred king of the big cage for three decades, wants to retire.

"The man who more than 30 years ago vowed he would make an act with the big cats so dangerous that no other trainer would accept his job for twice the salary, and succeeded in doing it, said today he would like to find a youth to take over his show.

"Beatty, who at 49 has the muscular physique and over-all appearance of a young athlete, would not directly admit that he is getting old.

"But," he said, "my reactions are slowing up....Those babies are beginning to worry me."

"The black curly-haired trainer parlayed a world of courage, a nimble mind and body, and humility to take a menial apprenticeship, a keen sensitivity and understanding of animals, and a profound patience into fame and fortune. As soon as he finds a young man with those same qualities, he will be Clyde Beatty's protégé."

Though he actually had no intention of retiring—as his four-decade career fighting the cats would demonstrate, Beatty certainly must have been seeking to hire a young assistant when the circus set up that spring for its annual extended run on the Fourth and Washington lot in Los Angeles.

A lobby card for the Martin and Lewis film.

That's where in April 1953 he spotted a black teenager and invited him to inspect the big cats closer. When the circus train pulled out of L.A., 14-year-old Manuel Ruffin was aboard, having gained his family's blessing to join.



Beatty tabbed his new employee "Junior" because he couldn't remember the lad's name. The nickname gave Junior a certain deference, if not respect, among peers on the circus lot.

Frank Orman.

The owner more than likely saw in Ruffin the same eagerness to learn the habits of untamed animals that Beatty had demonstrated when he was a teen age runaway and a raw cage boy in Ohio. Ruffin was still

absorbing his new duties when a more responsible assignment fell into his lap. Robert "Red" Hartman, who had been Beatty's gun bearer, left the show for a more lucrative offer. Charlotte Walch needed Hartman's help to break in a John Cuneo bear act. Charlotte had been widowed by the death of her husband, Joe Walch. A disciple of trainer Alfred Court, Walch had worked Harriett Beatty's elephant and tiger routine following her death in 1950. Walch also subbed for Beatty in the steel arena after two lions attacked the star trainer during a 1952 performance in Portland, Oregon.

Following Hartman's departure several months into the 1953 rail tour, "Beatty told me, 'You're going to have to take over Red's job.'" That change thrust Ruffin into the public's eye for the first time. Previously he had been restricted to the circus back yard where he cleaned cages and prodded the big cats from cage wagons in the menagerie, through the tunnel, and into the arena. Now, he would load blank cartridges into Beatty's .38-caliber pistol and hand it to Beatty as the star performer entered the arena safety cage to stir the furry combatants into a fighting frenzy. (Ruffin still has a box of the blanks in his home at North Port, Florida.) It was also his responsibility to carry spare whips as replacements should Beatty's whip get stuck in a pedestal during the routine.

They Only Stand and Serve

In assuming his new duties, Junior had to master a small but vitally important skill: tying a slip knot on the rope allowing the interior safety cage door to open into the steel arena. As always, timing was crucial in every aspect of the cage crew's collective and individual actions.

Even Ringmaster Johnny Cline, who was featured separately with his Liberty act, played an important but largely unnoticed role in the wild animal routine.

While whipping up the crowd's enthusiasm and announcing Beatty's grand entry, the ringmaster moved to the back of the arena and gripped the handle controlling the tunnel door. "That was his job, to work the door" throughout the act, Ruffin explained. "Now, Beatty would run around to the front of the arena and take his bow. Then, Johnny would open the tunnel door to let in the first lion."

After Beatty entered the steel arena to do battle with his four-legged protagonists, "I'm standing behind the safety cage, putting the slip knot on the rope attached to the inside safety cage door." At the climax of the routine, when Beatty, as planned, retreated from a charging lion, the slip knot had to give so that the door quickly and amazingly opened in a split second. As the trainer crashed into the square cage, Junior's reflexes kicked in. "I had to be on my toes, because if you don't pull that door shut immediately and keep on holding rope, the lion could pull it open."

With the act underway, Junior might need to hand the trainer a long pole through the bars. If the cats' fighting got out of hand, Beatty would shout "doors!," sending his assistant running to the safety cage.

The arena sections were painted dark blue. So that the trainer could easily distinguish the safety cage door from rest of the arena, three of the bars on the cage door were painted white, Ruffin pointed out.

Later in the 1953 season, as the circus crossed the Mason-Dixon line, Beatty armed his protégé with another set of skills: coping with deep-seated racial bias. When Junior had joined the show in Los Angeles, "I knew nothing about discrimination. Now I was gun bearer for Clyde Beatty, and I was telling other [white] crew members what to do. As soon as we got into the Southland, those who you said 'Yes' and 'No' to (during the Northern and Western stands), you now had to turn around and say 'yes sir' and 'no sir' as long as you were in public. It was nerve-racking for a while."

A Switch of Movie Titles

About the same time, Ruffin and his coworkers learned that several Hollywood screen writers were trailing the show. Their purpose, as touted by circus publicity, was to "interview many local citizens to get background on circus effects and material for use in the new picture." This was to be the first circus movie to be filmed in the three-dimensional viewing format.

"Tentative title is 'Man Killer'," announced a September 24 story in the Charleston, West Virginia, *Gazette*. Starring, naturally, Clyde Beatty, as well as mystery writer Mickey Spillane, the 3-D screen flick was being produced by John Wayne and Bob Fellows and was intended to be released by Warner Brothers in the spring of 1954.

By the time the circus reached Memphis on October 21, the title had been changed to *Ring of Fear*. Hollywood gossip columnist Bob Thomas wrote that veteran actor Pat O'Brien had flown to Memphis for the date to soak up some atmosphere for his role in the thriller. Filming was supposed to begin there but was postponed until the circus played its season finale at Galveston during the following week.

Meanwhile, the October 2, 1953, edition of the *Headlight* confirmed that Beatty finally had closed a one-year deal to bed down his circus in Deming.

Another article, on October 7, disclosed that the circus general manager, Frank Orman, was already in town and was supervising preparations for the show's arrival at the fairgrounds site. The front-page report was topped by a front-page publicity photo of three showgirls and baby elephant PeeWee. A three-column headline declared, "Ton of Hay and 300 Pounds of Meat Needed Daily To Feed Animals of Clyde Beatty Circus Wintering Here This Year."

Details followed.

"Orman said about 30 workmen are setting up the facilities in the two hangers and the gym, and clearing off a wide area for setting up the Big Top—in which the [*Ring of Fear*] movie will be made by the Wayne-Fellows Productions.



"Beatty himself is in Houston, Tex., now where he is winding up the season with a special Shriners show. He is expected in Deming Nov. 16, with the animals, 15 train cars—all double-length flats—and about 20 more workers. [The train's actual consist throughout the Beatty rail years was fixed at two baggage cars, nine flats and four coaches, including the owner's private car.]

A c-1940 studio image of Beatty.

"In conjunction with making the motion picture, doing his own shows and working the animal act, Beatty's workers during their stay here will repair and replace worn equipment and give the entire show a new paint job.

"It takes a lot of equipment to operate a circus, Orman says—about \$300,000 at today's replacement value. Of that, some \$30,000 worth of canvas makes up the Big Top and the menagerie tent. . . .

"Only the equipment of the circus is at the air base," the story concluded, "but from the amount of it anyone can see what a large operation the Beatty circus is."

Galveston Hosts Parade, Cameras

The Beatty aggregation closed out its 1953 season with a three-day, five-show stand at Galveston on October 27-29. To generate community participation and media attention the circus press corps relied on two tried-and-true gimmicks—staging a downtown parade (primarily for the benefit of 3-D cameras) and dressing up a local newspaper reporter as "clown for a day."

Galveston scribe Terry MacLeod summarized her experience of clowning around with performers whose names remain familiar to many circus historians: "Tuesday night (October 27) I made my debut under the big top in a most important role—what people call the loom on which to weave a circus—a clown.

"Earl Shipley, publicity director for the Clyde Beatty Circus, was once a clown. He clowning around for more than 40 years. . . . He directed me to 'clown row.' [Shipley was actually the elephant superintendent.]

"I stood before the great of clown fame: Roy Barrett, who's been digging into the paint and powder pots for more than 42 years, Lawrence Cross, Ernie Burch, known all over the nation as Blinko, and Gene Warnecke.

"The youngest of the clowns was a serious man with horned rimmed glasses (Eddie Dullum). He's only been clowning around for 18 years. He formerly was a school teacher.

"Dullum gave me a white suit with black trim. . . . He draped a towel over my shoulders and started painting. . . . It was fun clowning around for an evening. . . ."

Frank Walters.

With circus publicists ballying the Wednesday (October 28) parade, the movie producers got the crowd they wanted for the filming, and the procession was beefed up with the participation of four area high school bands and local attention-seeking politicians. Again, the Galveston paper's after-report waxed eloquently: "Sirens from police cars in which the city and county fathers were riding, heralded the cross section of the circus attractions which were on display for the public.

"Clyde Beatty, Mr. Circus, dressed in white tropical clothing and wearing a pith helmet, accompanied by his lovely wife, sitting on the back of a convertible, drew a great deal of attention from the spectators.

"Lions and tigers, roaring and putting on a good performance, were paraded in cages. These are the same ones which Beatty uses in his act in the circus.

"Caged monkeys carried on their rollicking antics, and two furry llamas were greatly admired by the crowds.

"Girls dressed in various costumes added beauty and glamour to the lineup. Many were perched atop the huge elephants.

"Camels accompanied by circus attendants in Arab costumes and Nubians in native costumes led the procession of the elephants."

Recalling his role in that Texas parade more than 55 years later, Ruffin groused that he had to wear Bedouin garb while leading Eddie, a "mean camel who could kick from any direction," and marching five miles from the train siding, through the downtown business district and on to the circus lot in Hurd's Lane Park. There, "a red, white and blue Big Top" and the side show awaited paying customers for the matinee.

Frank Walters and Clyde Beatty.

To the disappointment of thousands of onlookers, the 3-D footage was rendered useless because of a hasty decision by the producers to switch the movie format to Cinemascope. The theater and drive-in movie industry was counting on this ultra-wide-screen format to win back audiences that



had become addicted to entertainment they could view at home on their black-and-white TV sets.

Ill Winds Return to Deming

Deming's aspirations as a major motion picture filming location also were dashed.

While the Beatty train was en route to the new quarters, the motion picture crew was already at work in Deming, capturing sequences not involving circus people or backdrops.

"Actual shooting . . . is expected to start here today," the Deming *Graphic* reported on Tuesday, November 17. "Film company officials said the filming of the movie is expected to take at least five weeks. . . .

"Just about all the technicians and people who will make the movie have arrived in Deming and are being housed in five sepa-

rate local motels. About 80 to 85 filmland people will be here during the production.

"All of the shooting will be done here, it was reported. . . . Much of the shooting will be done in and around the Big Top which the Beatty Circus will erect at the location they have at the old airbase in east Deming."

The Friday, November 20, *Headlight* noted that scenes involving actor Sean McClory, whose maniacal character was to escape from a mental ward and hop an outbound freight (later to become ringmaster on an unsuspecting circus), had been filmed at the Deming armory, Luna County jail and the railroad depot.

A companion story alerted readers that "all youngsters and old who have yearned to watch a circus unload and wanted to see a Hollywood picture being made will get the opportunity to witness both on Saturday morning.

"That's the day Clyde Betty and his famous circus arrive at their winter headquarters in Deming. . . . Unloading of lions, tigers, elephants, horses and all the circus equipment will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday at the old air base with spectators permitted to watch the operations."

It never happened. The circus train did pull into Deming as scheduled, but the canvas crew did not raise the big top at the base, and there was no performance. Instead, both the movie crew and the circus train abruptly departed for Phoenix, Arizona. The Deming *Headlight* offered two explanations for the unexpected shift: "It is with sincere regret that we are leaving Deming," co-producer Robert Fellows announced on Tuesday, November 24. "Unfortunately the unseasonable winds interfered with the recording of dialogue and the filming of some circus sequences."

On the same front page of its November 27 edition, the weekly paper highlighted this conflicting account: "While Deming was sweltering under a balmy November sky and the Wayne-Fellows Productions troupe was on its way to 'frigid' Phoenix, the Deming Chamber of Commerce came up with the real reason the movie people



left Deming.

"According to our Chamber of Commerce the film family was allowed to leave in order to make way for the big fourth-quarter meeting of the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association."

If the later account was on the level, this meant that Deming was turning its back on the revenues derived from feeding and housing the 80-person entourage for more than a month.

The move to Arizona probably caused no tears among the departing the movie crew. Leading players Pat O'Brien and Mickey Spillane probably bypassed Deming altogether and flew into Phoenix, which offered a larger array of hotels, restaurants and after-hours diversions.

Just before the circus train pulled out for the west-bound trip, Beatty huddled with Deming village officials to negotiate new five-year lease of several base structures. "The Board of Trustees . . . and Beatty probably will get together to iron out details when he returns from Phoenix in about four weeks," the *Headlight* reported. "Beatty has already decided to winter here this year. He described Deming as 'a perfect winter quarters.'" [Betty did, in fact, ink the contract in February, 1954.]

The owner also mentioned he might eventually install "an exhibit of his collection of old circus wagons as a permanent show" at his new base of operations.

Enter Frank Walter Jr.

Beatty had obtained the historic wagons by nurturing a friendship with Houston oilman Frank Walter Jr., a longtime circus model builder and member of Circus Fans of America. Walter was described by the Associated Press as "the greatest—in scope—circus fan of them all." Of greater significance to Beatty was the millionaire oilman-philanthropist's collection of circus wagons.

In the January 19, 1940, AP dispatch, writer Gladwin Hill, a fellow CFA member, reported that Walter had just purchased a number of Downie Bros. circus wagons at auction in Houston. To these he added equipment he had previously obtained from Gentry Bros, as well as a bevy of circus animals—lions, tigers, elephants, horses, monkeys and even a zebra.

Lobby poster for *Ring of Fear* movie.

The wire service story went on to explain that "Walter was bitten by the circus bug when he was 7, and right then started training animals. He worked up until he was a full-fledged amateur lion tamer."

A feature in the January 5, 1935, San Antonio *Light* re-



vealed that Walter learned the basics of the care and training of animals from a Houston zoo keeper. In addition, "the young man [Walter] rounded out his education in animal training at the winter quarters of Christy Brothers circus in South Houston, where he was tutored by Captain Terrell Jacobs, noted wild animal expert.

Junior Ruffin on Hoxie Bros. Circus.

"Then one day in the Spring of 1932," the story continued, "an official of a Houston orphans' home familiar with Walter's collec-

tion of wild and domesticated animals (said to exceed 150) asked the amateur lion trainer to bring his animals out to the home to entertain the kiddies. . . .

"Demand for exhibitions of his show grew, even spreading to the neighboring cities of Galveston and Beaumont, and now the Walter circus gives as many performances as the busy young financier and his wife have the time to take part in. . . .

"The Walters see to it that every youngster who is a guest at their show has its fill of refreshments. 'For who ever heard of a circus,' Walter says, 'without peanuts and pink lemonade for the kiddies!'"

A later feature in the *Light* (April 3, 1940) noted that the circus enthusiast was "putting on an act with lions similar to the act of his friend, Clyde Beatty, famed circus animal trainer. . . . The [Walter] circus 'winters' in a Houston park and the animals are on free display to the public throughout the year."

The open-air, three-ring Original Frank Walter Underprivileged Children's Circus ended its 10-year summertime run in 1942 following America's entry into World War II.

In the November 30, 1952, Charleston, West Virginia, *Daily Mail*, CFA member J. Paul Rusk credited Walter "with originating the idea of sponsoring circuses to help benefit crippled children. His idea evolved into the present-day tours of the Polack Bros. circus backed by the Shrine."

Walter may have backed Beatty in the launching of the trainer's first rail circus in 1945. Following Walter's 1952 death, at age 46, Beatty maintained his ties to Mrs. Walter. She not only carried out her husband's wishes to give the circus wagons to Beatty, but also pumped money into Beatty's operations.

The circus owner also benefited from the use of his circus in the back-to-back production of two motion pictures in Phoenix during the 1953 winter months, *Ring of Fear* and *3-Ring Circus*, a Martin and Lewis vehicle.

Big Top Blow Down

Junior Ruffin, after completing his first touring season, was one of six cage hands who traveled separately with the

big cats to the Phoenix fairgrounds for the filming of *Ring of Fear*. Though he grew up not far from the Hollywood stages, it was his first experience in watching a film crew in action. The special camera lenses juttied through the arena bars, giving theater patrons their first close-up, wide-screen look at Beatty's fighting act. Also filmed were the Wallendas, Tiny Gallagher's head balancing, the Flying Zacchins, and Johnny Cline's liberty horses. Cline's wife, Milonga Escalante, worked a pony drill and an elephant trio on tour.

Unlike Cecil B. De Mille's epic *The Greatest Show on Earth*, *Ring of Fear* didn't win any screen awards. At least one movie critic suggested that Beatty should keep his day job as a heralded performer and Spillane as a best-selling author. "Both could stand improvement in the thespian department," wrote Nadine Sabotalk in a column carried by a Cedar Rapids, Iowa, newspaper, on July 14, 1954.

The production company, however, was wrong to assume that by shifting shooting locales to Phoenix they would avoid disruptive winds. A December 14 story by AP columnist Thomas disclosed that *Ring of Fear* co-producer John Wayne "had just returned from a flying trip to Phoenix to check on damage to his picture. A gale had whipped through the circus tents, felling most of them. 'The tent poles in the big tent were swinging around like matchsticks,' (Wayne) reported. 'They had just moved 200 people out of there. Otherwise a lot of people would have been hurt.'"

The selected acts were filmed before the blow down, which required Beatty's staff to order a new tent so that production work could be completed. In the meantime, the trainer and his cage crew left Phoenix to perform at the first of Beatty's off-season contracted dates.

A new big top was ordered and shipped to Phoenix, along with the Beatty train and some circus wagons, for use in the production of *3 Ring Circus*, produced in Panavision, directed by Hal Wallis, and starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis.

Though Beatty and his cats were not used in the second film, Tiny Gallagher did serve as actress Zsa Zsa Gabor's double for aerial routines. And a number of Beatty's circus wagons were used as authentic set pieces. Deming cowboy Darrell Hawkins (profiled in the September-October 2009 *Bandwagon*) remembers being summoned to the New Mexico winter quarters to provide blacksmithing services. While there, he noticed painters retouching several Beatty wagons with the fictitious title "Clyde Brent Circus," as the Martin-Lewis shooting script called the show.

Meanwhile, the trainer and his publicity flacks continued to play rather fast and loose with the facts. They found show-biz columnist Thomas to be a willing foil for their latest gimmick. "Clyde Beatty is bringing back a venerable American institution—the circus parade," Thomas reported in a January 27, 1954, AP dispatch.

"We haven't had a parade for 2 years," said Beatty, circus operator and greatest of the wild animal trainers. "But this year we're going to try it. I got the idea when we staged a parade while we were filming *Ring of Fear* . . ." Never mind that Beatty circus staged a substantial number of parades along the previous year's route.

"Adding a parade will cost around \$500 a day," Beatty told the Hollywood gossip columnist, "but I figure it will be worth it . . . In fact, some towns in California won't grant us

a permit unless we put on a parade. . . .

"We've got some old circus wagons at our winter quarters in Deming, N.M., and I'm getting them out and painting them. We'll pull them with our jeeps. . . . We'll have a caliope and the animal cages have rubber wheels."

A truck pulling a lowboy trailer were used to transport three parade wagons for key West Coast dates during the 1954 season, which opened on March 20. They were returned to Deming just before the Beatty railer entered Canada.

Acclimating to Winter Quarters

While Beatty was basking in the media spotlight in California, Junior Ruffin was trying to adjust to rapid atmospheric changes in Deming.

Transported from Southern California's year-round balmy climate, he got his first taste of sub-zero temperatures in Deming on Christmas eve 1953. And on sunny winter days when the sun beat down on the high-desert landscape, Ruffin admits he was unnerved at the sight of rattlesnakes clustering to keep warm on the seldom-used runways. He was not accustomed to seeing tumbleweeds piled against base buildings and fences. At night he was serenaded by yelping coyotes and the whistles of coal-fired locomotives piercing the air as they steamed through the Deming yards.



Junior Ruffin dressed for his act on Hoxie Bros.

The 15 to 20 workers at winter quarters included such stalwarts as chief groom John McGraw, electrician Tom "Kilowatt" Fitzpatrick, and elephant handler Billy Cox, who doubled as transportation boss in the off season. In Beatty's absence, Ruffin and other cage hands performed their assigned duties under the watchful eye of George Scott.

Though small in stature—at 4'-10" Scott had a commanding presence around the ill-tempered beasts.

"He was never in the arena with them," Ruffin chuckled in a telephone interview, "but when they were in their cages, they listened to him."

To illustrate his point, he recalled a Shrine performance when Beatty was unable to break up a fight among the lions, always a crowd-pleasing staple of his act. "Junior, go get George; go get George!" yelled the trainer at the young cage boy positioned just outside the arena cage door. Junior fetched Scott and the diminutive handler emerged with a long pole. "When George came in, every one of those cats stopped and looked at him," Ruffin laughed. "He used to feed them, and when he'd put meat in their trays, he'd say, 'You'd better not eat until I tell you.' I mean, he had a way with them; he was unbelievable."

Scott was always at Junior's side when it came to the care and feeding of the big cats at winter quarters.

For the sharply reduced crew, the work-day schedule was generally less demanding and more predictable. As opposed to their primitive facilities on tour, workmen enjoyed the luxury of a shower room and private sleeping quarters in the front half of a former Army barracks. They only had to walk to the other end of the building to take meals in the cookhouse. Oil-fired heaters provided limited warmth larger winter quarters buildings. Coal was the heat source for a single pot-bellied stove in the bunkhouse.

"We'd take a tractor and wagon and go along the railroad tracks to pick up all the loose coal we wanted along the main line," Ruffin said. "They had a coal chute where they stopped the trains. And they would drop all that coal in back of the train."

Junior also recalled that "Pete the porter" hiked a mile from the circus train to the cookhouse at mealtimes. For most of the off season, the porter had the train to himself; he was "security."

Cooks served breakfast sharply at 7:00 a. m., and all hands were expected to be at their assigned posts half an hour later. Most had specialized duties.

Short Commute to Work

Some walked to one building where they focused on repairing ropes and rigging, repainting ring curbs and props, or patching canvas sections for the big top, menagerie, side show and the performers' dressing rooms.

A few hundred feet away Junior and the other cage hands entered the back door of another large wooden structure housing some 30 lions and tigers. An interior partition further separated elephants from the lead stock and small cage animals. In the front half of the hanger-type building, the four cat wagons were lined up back to back in the same order as they were on the road. After the cats had been watered, they were let out through a down chute into a tunnel connected to a Y-junction, where lions and tigers were segregated into two open-air arenas. There they could exercise or simply chose to nap.

With the felines outside, the handlers spent the next three hours scrubbing cage floors and sides. All the cage wagon interiors were painted white. "And do you know why? That was the way Clyde knew that we had cleaned them. That was one thing about Beatty," Ruffin said, "He always insisted on keeping the cages spic and span."

Following a half-hour lunch break, the workmen returned the lions and tigers to their individual compartments for feeding. (Beatty had no interest in captive breeding programs, the ex-cage attendant said.) Local purveyors regularly stocked a large, on-site ice box with horse meat sections, which the cage crew butchered into various cuts. The daily ration consisted of one-half of a hindquarter, supplemented by rib bones.

The cats received a final watering about 4:00 p.m. before the building was shut for the night. In addition to their cat-sitting

duties, the dedicated crew scrapped the steel arena sections, repainting them in Beatty's preferred dark blue shade. They also repaired, or replaced, the wooden bottoms and sides of the cats' pedestals.

Weather permitting, Billy Cox and the bull hands put the elephants outdoors on a picket line. On weekends, according to a 1955 Deming newspaper account, clusters of curious Deming residents and "others in the know" congregated outside the base to "peer through fences [at] the vast expanse of air base, orange-hued trains, trucks, jeeps, mountains of hay, circus paraphernalia—from sturdy roustabout to Clyde Beatty." Outside of occasional escorted tours of Boy and Girl Scouts, school classes and civic groups, locals were not allowed inside winter quarters because of insurance restrictions.

A good number of workmen spent weekends in an alcoholic haze. Given their meager compensation—\$2.50 a week plus room and board and a sack of Bull Durham, "everybody chipped in a quarter, and a few guys would make a liquor run" to a Mexican border town some 20 miles south of the winter quarters compound. They'd return toting four or five gallons of "black bale gin"—at \$2 per jug the cheapest booze available.

On week nights some walked three or four miles into Deming's small business district, which offered an assortment of restaurants, bars and pool halls. Ruffin and his black cohorts—two cooks and three or four workers—were not permitted inside these establishments. They literally went to the other side of the tracks for food and drink and, for those so inclined, the services of a bordello. (Deloris Hawkins believes at least one brothel may still be in business in that northside neighborhood).

An Ice Pick to the Head

Segregation was also the norm in the winter quarters bunkhouse. Black workingmen slept in separate rooms and kept to themselves at one table in the cookhouse. Though Ruffin insists he didn't drink, smoke or chew tobacco, he was an eager participant in low-stake crap games. On one memorable evening the enjoyable past time took a mean, almost fatal, turn, as Junior recalled: "Me and a couple of the young guys there was shooting dice—it had to be the second year at winter quarters. At this time I was 15 or 16 years old.

Beatty covered with perspiration following his act.

"Anyway, this big white guy—he must have been 6-1, 6-2, and I was just a skinny kid—came up and said to me, 'Boy, you look like you know what you're doing.' When I went to pick up the dice, he put his foot on my hand. Let me tell you, that was a painful feeling with the dice under my hand. And I pushed him away.

"As I picked up the dice off the wall, he stabbed me (with an ice pick) just beside my left ear. Then I fell over and screamed, 'Oh



my God, somebody help me!" His assailant fled.

"When they went to pull that ice pick out, the handle came off," Ruffin continued. "The pick was twisted to the bone. One of the working men had a pair of pliers. He said, 'This is going to hurt,' and he pulled it out. He told me, 'Junior you've got to let that bleed,' because I could have gotten blood poisoning. And he took a single-edge razor blade and cut an X and let my wound bleed. Back then, going to a doctor was a no-no."

Several days later, Ruffin got his revenge as the bully was eating in the bunkhouse. "I was walking with my head sideways (his wound exposed to the air and still draining to prevent infection). I was carrying a slat from a bunk bed. I slipped up to him, and he said, 'What are you going to do with that board?' I said, 'Do you remember me?' And I hit him smack in the face; that board broke in two places. He started yelling, 'Please don't hit me anymore!'"

"I must have hit him two or three more times. Several other workers came up and yelled, 'Stop it, Junior. You're going to kill him.'"

"Later he came up to me and apologized. He found out that I worked for Clyde Beatty personally. See, that's what helped me out a lot [at winter quarters and on tour]. You know, as time went by, him and I turned out to be the best friends." Ruffin was unable to recall the name of his attacker. Neither of the combatants reported their dust ups to local police.

Another brawl made front-page news on March 12, 1956, just three days from the season opening performances before a hometown audience. The *Headlight* reported that a Beatty circus employee had been found guilty in district court of stabbing another workman on February 26.

Overall, however, Ruffin said the workers enjoyed good times in Deming. But he was more than ready to exchange winter quarters duties for the opportunity to accompany Beatty's big cats on a series of engagements on behalf of the Shrine.

Shipping Cats to Shrine Dates

"Every year when the show closed, the cat department went a different direction" from other left-behinds at winter quarters, he said.

And so did the show's namesake. Between his multi-city Shrine schedule and a few weeks vacationing with his family in California, Beatty spent relatively little time in his private rail car on the fairgrounds siding.

Ruffin said his boss needed only a couple of rehearsal sessions in the outdoor arena to get his act primed for the spring opener. That's because the wintertime dates kept both him and his cantankerous cats in fighting shape, literally.

Beatty never rode the train with the caged animals or his crew en route to these lucrative indoor dates. Instead, thanks to the competence of his handlers, he only had to show up at the show venue to inspect the condition of flooring beneath the wooden shavings and the placement of props inside the big cage prior to his opening performance.

The transportation of his cats followed an entirely different protocol from the regular season tour. For starters, the four cage wagons were left at winter quarters. Some 30 cats were transferred into individual wooden crates—the proper terminology was "shifting boxes," and hoisted by tractor

onto a flatbed trailer. They were shuttled to a downtown rail siding on the main line, where Ruffin and his fellow roadies manhandled the live cargo into two or three leased baggage cars, along with the steel arena sections, chutes and props. Also packed into the cars was a supply of meat to feed the cats during the two- three-day rail journey to Detroit, the first Shrine date after the New Year. The shifting boxes, fashioned at winter quarters from 4x8-foot plywood sections, were equipped with side handles and a front door over cage bars to permit workers to lift the 600-plus-pound loads without being subjected to being clawed by the surly occupants.



Trunk wagon No. 82 shows the construction of the wagons originally built for the Sparks show in 1946.

The steel-banded boxes were stacked two high, with one end of each crammed against the wall and the other facing outward. Workers were able to tend to the animals through an opening below the embedded bars. This left a walking corridor of less than five feet between the shipping boxes and the opposite baggage car wall. Ruffin said he fed the restive felines with a long, two-prong fork.

"There were only two of us who could get down between there," Ruffin recalled. "We had to be very careful because those cats could reach out three feet and snap you in there. But we fed them and cleaned them and watered them. We put hay in the shifting boxes—sawdust wasn't any good, because you don't want to feed them on sawdust," which Beatty used in the arena. "Even at night when we were moving we had to put hay in the boxes." The animal cargo included a half dozen "dead heads," replacements for cats unable to perform on the road.

The 21 arena sections, including the safety cage, were secured in the front half of one baggage car, along with the collapsible steel chute sections, and the cage props. Cage hands slept either on top of the stacked, 6x12-foot arena bars or the shipping boxes for the two- or three-day rail journey from Deming to Detroit and subsequently to fulfill other Shrine bookings in Cleveland, Rochester, St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Because the cat crew was often shorthanded, other working men were recruited at winter quarters to help out on the winter dates. "Others traveled from one city to the next, and then they'd blow the show."

Don't Call Trainer "Shorty"

Once the leased baggage cars were spotted in the Detroit rail yards for the opening stand, Ruffin supervised moving the big cats and cage paraphernalia to the fairgrounds arena. There, and at subsequent venues, the cage crew's duties followed standard operating procedures.

The cage crew aligned the shipping boxes end to end in a hallway adjacent to the dedicated backstage doorway. Next, they set up the collapsible tunnel sections leading into the arena. The task of erecting and tearing down the steel arena and spotting the cats' "furniture" for each performance was left to a prop crew hired by the circus producer. (When the trainer wasn't around, the Detroit prop crew nicknamed him "Scrap-Iron Shorty," Ruffin chuckled. A select few of Beatty's managers and performers and his wife occasionally addressed him as "Buster." "But never the working men," Junior injected. "We all called him 'Mr. Beatty.'"

Given his celebrity status, Beatty was entitled to the comforts of a nearby hotel. Meanwhile, back at the arena, the noisy big cats and their minders bedded down on hay in a smelly, roped-off hall.

Junior was paid better on the winter tour—\$50 a week compared to \$14 during the regular season. But the increased compensation didn't cover the cost of meals, which the cage crew had to scrounge for themselves at neighboring diners.

Clyde Beatty never disappointed his fans. There's little doubt that he was one of the most energetic, spell-binding performers of his era. Every time he emerged from the arena Beatty's white costume was drenched in sweat. He ran through a half dozen outfits a week. Some could be hung out to dry and reused at the next show. During a string of one-day stands, Junior might have to seek out a local laundry that offered same-day service to bleach the stains from the jungle king's wardrobe.

Obviously tired after each performance, Beatty did not want anyone to interrupt his solitude for the next half hour, Junior being an exception. The teenage attendant removed his boss's boots and shined them for the next show. He also reloaded the trainer's pistol, knowing the blanks Beatty fired in the ring were more for the audience's benefit than his safety.

Beatty's Bounty: Guns, Booze

Ruffin disclosed that due to Beatty's long-standing friendship with the Detroit chief of police, "sometimes they would bring 30, 40, 50 pistols and just give them to Beatty. These were guns that police had confiscated from criminals." Being a performer, not a sportsman, Beatty had no use for weapons outside the revolver Junior handed him as he entered the arena safety cage. Sorting through the castoffs, Junior reserved a few for the act, sold others to earn extra cash and gave some to the cage crew. "But I wouldn't let any of them carry guns on the job."

The only incidence he can recall of Beatty's being stopped

for carrying a gun occurred just before a performance in New Jersey in the late 1950s. A uniformed officer ordered Beatty to remove his weapon from its holster for inspection. The showman complied, producing his son's cap pistol. "It was just a part of Clyde's wardrobe," Ruffin explained. "He never used it in the arena."

During the Detroit engagement Shriners delivered as many as 50 cases of whiskey for Beatty's disposal, Ruffin said. At the end of the run the trainer would instruct his trusted acolyte to "take what's left over and distribute it to the guys at winter quarters."

Arthur M. Concello.



Another part of Junior's daily routine during the indoor dates and on tour was to ice down a bucket stocked with bottled Coca Cola in the owner's dressing room. "He wouldn't drink nothing but VO and Coke. He would drink every day. Matter of fact, he was an alcoholic," Ruffin told the writer, almost as an afterthought.

Johnny Pugh, who was a manager on the Beatty-Cole show in the waning years of Beatty's career, offered his own insights. "Clyde liked to have a glass of Seagram's 7. I mean, when the show went up into Canada, he smuggled the stuff back in the cages with the lions."

But, Pugh emphasized, "I never saw Clyde drunk in all of the years I was there."

Ruffin concurred.

Drawing from his own later experiences as wild animal trainer, boss canvasman and train master, Ruffin differentiated between an "alcoholic" and a "drunk." "In my lifetime [with circuses] I have seen guys who from Monday to Saturday were the greatest persons that you ever wanted to be around. Then come Sunday—payday—they started with that alcohol. Some of them could drink mildly and were no problem. Others got so sloppy drunk that you just wanted to get rid of them. But you knew a guy's potential when he was sober, so you went along with it."

As for Beatty, "I never saw him stumble, I never saw him drunk," Ruffin said. "I don't know if I ever saw him high, because he was always the same. I guess [drinking] was his relaxation. But in the long run, it took him to the grave. I don't know if he ever admitted he was an alcoholic, but that's what ate up the inside of him. Surgeons had to remove part of his stomach [in 1964], and the rest of it is history." Beatty died of cancer of the esophagus in 1965.

Owner Gambled, Often

Even if the trainer were not addicted to alcohol, it's certain that another of his behind-the-scenes activities had a negative impact on his finances. "One of his bad habits was he liked to gamble," Pugh told the writer. "And where he lost all his money was gambling. I mean, I can remember [GM Frank] Orman telling me, 'We bet on the Gillette fight of the week, and we didn't even know the names of the fighters. We'd just pick the color of the trunks or what corner they were in to have a bet.'"

Added Ruffin, "When I first went around him, money was no problem for him, because anytime he needed money, he would go to Mrs. Walter, and she was always there for him."

Of greater significance to investors and circus employees alike was Beatty's paucity of business judgment, often accompanied by a noticeable lack of interest in the front end of the show.

"Clyde was a great performer, and everybody liked him," said Pugh, who became a Beatty-Cole manager in the early 1960 and the owner in late 1981. "But he wasn't a business operator."

Once he completed his big-top act, Beatty didn't hob knob with other performers. Disinterested in everyday operations, he told circus folk to take up their beefs with Orman. And he avoided the office wagon for days at a time, Ruffin claimed.

Thus, the demands of his role as the star performer frequently took precedence over his responsibilities as show owner.

Junior Stays Home, Briefly

Beatty could be effusive in praise for his young cage hand. But Junior's direct access also made him the handy target of Beatty's anger when things did not go right in the arena. He left the trainer's employ on several occasions, but always returned.

In 1954 Junior took a temporary detour from his career path. When the circus reached Los Angeles in April, he decided to quit the show so he could continue his formal education. He was placed in the tenth grade at Jefferson High.

This domesticity lasted only a few months. Ruffin abandoned L. A. for the last time. Rather than immediately rejoining the circus, however, Ruffin hitchhiked to Washington State, where he wrangled jobs as a migrant farm worker, picking apples, raspberries and tomatoes. When those crops petered out, he ventured down to Sacramento to harvest green peas.

Realizing that, if he were going to be a migrant laborer, he preferred circus life, Ruffin phoned the Beatty winter quarters in November. Informed that his old job awaited him, Junior bought a one-way Greyhound bus ticket to Deming.

By that time Beatty was already playing his winter indoor dates. But the trainer left instructions for his young cage hand to break in a group of bears that Beatty had recently acquired. Junior balked. Earlier his mentor had declared, "'Junior, I'm going to make you a lion tamer.' I said, 'No you're not!' Because at that time I was afraid of those animals.'"

Arthur Concello on Ringling-Barnum.

The owner reasoned with his cage boy that blacks who wanted to be entertainers could only aspire to careers as singers or dancers. "Beatty told me, 'You don't have that kind of talent, Junior.



But if you're a lion tamer, you won't have to compete against anybody.'"

Though Ruffin ignored Beatty's orders concerning the bears, he continued to make himself generally useful. With elephant handler Billy Cox as his teacher, Junior learned how to shift a five-gear transmission on circus trucks, practicing on the air base aprons and runways. He passed the exam for his New Mexico chauffeur's license—"I lied about my age." Ruffin and Cox drove two GMC trucks pulling flatbed trailers to Houston to pick up the remaining historic circus wagons that Frank Walter had donated to Beatty.

Beatty-Concello: A Rocky History

Meanwhile, Ruffin remembers, "there were rumors that Beatty was having a hard time. That's when Art Concello came in and bought 51 per cent of the show—at least that's what I heard."

An AP story on January 6, 1955, confirmed the linkup: "Clyde Beatty and Arthur M. Concello, two of the nation's widely known circus figures, have formed a partnership and will tour the country in the coming season. . . .

"Concello, triple somersault star in his younger days, will have charge of the show and Beatty will be the star performer.

"The announcement was made by Roland Butler, press agent for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus, from his home (in Palmetto, Florida). . . .

"The amount of money involved was not disclosed but Butler said Concello would bring many improvements to the enterprise, including folding steel chairs, air-conditioned tents and other innovations for which he is noted. . . .

"This deal brings together the country's outstanding wild animal trainer and leading circus man," Butler said. "It will be a happy union and will give America a great amusement enterprise."

Based on their previous joint attempts at financial bliss, this mutually beneficial reunion would be anything but harmonious.

The two had similar backgrounds as Midwesterners—Beatty hailing from Bainbridge, Ohio, and Concello being reared in Bloomington, Illinois. Both joined the circus at age 16. And both had been trained by the best in their specialties: Beatty by Louis Roth, Peter Taylor and John "Chubby" Guilfoyle, and Concello in his hometown by Eddie Ward of the Flying Wards.

In the early 1930s both were already star performers, with Concello turning triples on the Big One and Beatty performing on the Ringling-owned Hagenbeck-Wallace. (Because of John Ringling's distaste for wild animal acts, Beatty did not get the opportunity to debut his act on Ringling Bros. until the 1931 stand at Madison Square Garden. The famed trainer reprised his routine during Ringling indoor dates in New York City and Boston in 1933 and 1934, each time being returned to Hagenbeck-Wallace.)

By the time they embarked on their initial joint venture in 1944, their roles had changed dramatically. Beatty was still the prime-time performer, continuing to build his reputation on other shows. Concello, on the other hand, had vacated the center ring to focus on recruiting, training and managing troupes of flyers, which he placed on various circuses. The AP announced the pairing on December 31, 1943:

"Art Concello, who came down off a circus trapeze to buy the Russell Bros. circus, announced today that his show and Clyde Beatty's wild animal circus will be combined for the 1944 season."

Beatty whetted his appetite to be a circus owner in 1935. He plowed his profits from the book version of *The Big Cage* and his movies into the Zack Terrell-Jess Adkins-operated Cole Bros. Circus. He left after that show faltered in 1938. In 1939 the famed animal trainer booked his wild animal act on a number of Hamid-Morton dates and on the Hamid-owned Steel Pier in Atlantic City for a 12-week stint.

In 1941 and 1942 Beatty had a back-end circus on the Johnny E. Jones Exposition, a rail-based carnival. Appropriately, the performing celebrity joined the Lions Club in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where he operated Clyde Beatty's Jungle Zoo from 1941 to 1945.

In 1943, Beatty and Concello became business competitors on the tanbark trail. The trainer toured Clyde Beatty-Wallace Bros. Circus, and the former trapeze star acquired the Russell Bros. title from C.W. and Pauline Webb, who had established a strong route in California. Both shows were truckers.

By the end of that season Concello was facing legal action, as explained in an AP dispatch on December 9: "Two of three partners who bought the Russell Brothers Circus last June 27 have filed suit against the third, Arthur M. Concello, veteran aerialist, for dissolution of the partnership.

"The plaintiffs, Jack Joyce and Louis Berg, contend they put up a portion of the \$50,000 purchase price and supplied some of the circus equipment. They assert that friction developed and that last October in Denver Concello barred them from the premises and declined to account for circus earnings. They demand an accounting and sale of the show. . . . The Russell show is now in winter quarters" in Los Angeles.

Mrs. Frank Walters.

The dispute must have been settled, because Joyce and his horses were on the Clyde Beatty-Russell Bros. truck show which Beatty and Concello fielded for the 1944 season. The renewed partnership made sense as AP writer Hubbard Keavy pointed out on June 10, 1944: "Most of the nation's aerial acts are under contract to Artie, so he can assign his acts wherever he pleases. . . . With Beatty's wild animals and Artie's flying acts, this circus has among the best in those divisions."

Concello was also responsible for having the Beatty-Russell big top fireproofed immediately following Ringling's disastrous blaze on July 6, 1944, in Hartford, Connecticut.

Again, however, the circus odd couple separated at the close of the season. Concello teamed up with Jack Tavlin to tour Russell Bros. Great Pan-Pacific Circus on rails in 1945.

Circus Owner, at Last

At the same time, Beatty achieved a long-standing personal goal—owning a full-fledged, three-ring circus under his name only. The new Clyde Beatty Trained Wild Animal

Circus moved on trucks. According to a 1963 *Bandwagon* article by historian Wm. L. Elbirn, Beatty had acquired the Wallace title and most of that show's physical assets from Ray Rogers. He also recruited the widow of ex-circus owner and cowboy actor Tom Mix to anchor a western-themed after show. Mrs. Mix was on the Beatty tour only a short while, dropping off the circuit due to ill health.

Attempting to outdo the Beatty epic, Concello padded the Pan Pacific roster with a superior array of well-known acts. They included not only his wife, Antoinette, who consistently connected on the triple somersault, but also the multi-talented Cristiani family, Pallenberg's bears, the Konyot troupe's equestrian routines, and elephants trained by Mac MacDonald and presented by Norma Rogers.

Of greater significance in the long term was Concello's ability to assemble a top-flight team for key positions. The Pan Pacific show was a case in point; there Concello had the services of Frank McCloskey as manager; Orrin Davenport, director of personnel; Robert Reynolds, props; Roland Butler and Leland Antes, press and radio.

Even though Concello and Beatty reverted to their rivalry for the 1945 season, they largely stayed out of each other's way, with the former flyer's rail show playing communities along the West Coast and in the Southwest, and the big-cat trainer routing his truck circus through the East and South.

The Concello show's earning potential was weighted down by his inflated payroll expenses and dogged by crippling rains in its closing weeks. At trail's end he chose to send the Russell Bros. train to El Paso for wintering. In the meantime, Concello had renewed his courtship with Beatty, who had the more recognizable, bankable name.

On December 22, 1945, *Billboard* reported that the Clyde Beatty Circus was putting most of his truck fleet and equipment up for sale. The circus bible further disclosed on January 12, 1946, that Beatty had struck a deal with Concello for the use of the Russell Bros. rail cars. Perhaps it came as no surprise that Concello's private rail car, Randy (named after his son) was a part of the 15-car fleet of the all-new Clyde Beatty Wild Animal Railroad Circus when it pulled out of the far west Texas city on March 23.

Their relationship still tenuous, the pair had another parting of the ways at the close of the 1946 season. The

November 16 *Billboard* broke the news. "Clyde Beatty confirmed this week a report that he is about to become the sole owner of the Clyde Beatty Circus." Beatty decided to winter in the East Texas community of Nacogdoches. Concello, along with key staffers, returned to Ringling Bros. where he assumed the GM role. Concello also reportedly loaned John Ringling North the money to put together a 51 per cent controlling interest in the Greatest Show on Earth. The former flyer would remain as Ringling's top operating executive through 1954, creating and introducing such labor-saving devices as mechanized seat wagons that would make him money for years to come.

While Concello was making great strides as a top executive, Beatty was struggling with a wildly erratic bottom line



so familiar to other circus owners.

Concello Linked to Shooting

Though Concello earned a reputation among his media followers for being on top of his business game, he was unable to extricate himself from adverse publicity which accompanied an embarrassing incident in 1953 in far West Texas.

In the early-morning hours of Saturday, October 10, El Paso police were alerted to the shooting of an aerialist on the Ringling Bros. train following performances in that city. The victim, identified as Margaret Smith, 22, was taken to a local hospital for treatment. Her wound, reported the El Paso *Herald-Post* on October 12, was "caused by a bullet that entered her hip, ranged upward through her pelvis, and lodged near her kidneys. The bullet will be left there, doctors decided."

She told investigators, "I don't know who shot me."

According to the article, "the detectives questioned Arthur Concello . . . [who] was at Miss Smith's bedside today.

"In his statement Concello said he left a railroad car in which his wife, Antoinette, lived, at 11 p.m. Friday (October 9). From the Santa Fe yards, Concello told police, he walked to Hotel Paso del Norte and back to the train and there met Miss Smith.

"After the couple later entered Circus Car 369 and there had a drink . . . Miss Smith then left for her own car.

"She was gone about two minutes when I heard a shot (about 3:30 a.m.) and she came back, telling me she had been shot," Concello said."

Inconsistencies in the young aerialist's stories apparently troubled lawmen, and Concello's attempts to derail the investigation went for naught.

The *Herald-Post* continued to make the general manager a front-page headliner on Tuesday, October 13: "Circus Superintendent Says Girl Aerialist Was Shot Accidentally," read the two-column type heading, under a photo of the grimacing victim in her hospital room.

In a boldfaced update to the newspaper's running account, Concello told detectives in a "new statement" that Miss Smith "was lying down in a circus car and he was examining a gun that was in the car and it went off accidentally. He said he did not make such a statement previously because he wanted to 'keep down publicity.' . . .

"Detective Lieutenant Horak said that the case is closed because Miss Smith said the shooting was an accident and the District Attorney's office said there will be no prosecution."

Concello's personal problems became common knowledge in the circus community as the result of a subsequent report in *Billboard*. It was all too much for Antoinette Concello, who obtained a divorce from her one-time mentor. And despite Maggie Smith's claim in the shooting's aftermath that she would return to her native England, she remained with the show and at some future time apparently married the man who shot her.

Beatty Buys Back Show

Just a year later, on December 4, 1954, an AP story datelined Sarasota revealed that "Frank McCloskey today became the general manager of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, succeeding Arthur Concello, who announced

his resignation.

"McCloskey, who had worked as manager under Concello for several years, was boss property man on the show when Concello and his wife were stars on the flying trapeze.

"He has been connected with the Ringling show for many years and was property man for Lillian Lietzel when the famous aerialist fell to her death in Copenhagen in the late 1920s [1931]. (Actually, Pugh pointed out in his recent interview, McCloskey was Miss Lietzel's rigger.)

"Concello said in a statement announcing his resignation that he was 'tired after 30 years in show business' and intended to 'rest and relax here at home.'"

Half sheet posters used in 1956.

In fact, he had spent much of the year in behind-the-scenes negotiations with Beatty, who was going through a period of financial turbulence. In a letter dated March 9, 1954, to Dr. William M. Mann, director of the National Zoo in

Washington, DC, Beatty lamented that "have a very good show this year, but business has been off at least twenty-five percent."

Beatty, in a repeat of the mid-1940s opera, accepted Concello's financial support. Once again, Concello was largely content to stay in the background, though he now firmly controlled the reins. With the fresh infusion of cash, Beatty ordered new seat wagons from the Lewis Diesel Company in Memphis. This was necessitated in part, explained Ruffin, by the tightening of restrictions in California on the use of jack-and-stringer seating.

Concello's deft creative skills were a boon to the performance. "In '55 they had one of the most beautiful Wild West shows on the road," Ruffin noted. "Rex Rossi was featured for a while."

Accompanying Concello on one of his Deming visits was his brother. "Joe Concello taught me how to weld," Ruffin said. "He had nothing to do with the show. He wasn't a performer or anything like that."

Junior cast around for "apple pie" to supplement his pay as Beatty's gun bearer and cage boy, which, as he recalled, had increased marginally to \$23 a week. Ruffin also was responsible for tending to Beatty's wardrobe and shining his boots in Wagon 81, which, following the removal of props at each lot, became Beatty's private dressing room.

After completing his assigned chores, Junior and three other workingmen found time to set up wardrobe trunks for other performers once their tent was in the air near the big top back door. "Each of the clowns would give us a dollar a





The big show band in a 1954 parade,

week to load their trunks," he said. "But the Hanneford troupe had more trunks than anybody—five or six—and they paid us a flat three dollars a week. We split \$37 a week among the four of us.

"At night we loaded the trunks while the tent crew was taking the menagerie down. By that time the cat wagons were loaded and ready to go to the train.

"The only time I had a part in transportation was to drive the tractors and to unhook the wagons. I tried a little poling, but that was too dangerous.

"I remember one time I was so tired at the end of the day that I crawled up on a seat wagon and went to sleep. They loaded me and the wagon on the train, and I didn't wake up until the next morning when we got into the next town," he chuckled.

'55 Tour Stocks Coffers

The Beatty train—still at 15 cars—left Deming to open the 1955 season in El Paso on March 18. The 26-week tour took the show to its West Coast dates, followed by a swing through northwestern Canada and a series of Midwestern

stands. By the time it closed in Clovis, New Mexico, on September 29 and made the 447-mile home run to Deming the next day, the Beatty train had covered 13,546 miles. Overall, it had been a very profitable tour.

Duncan Renaldo.

"I remember Los Angeles paid off so well that Clyde Beatty bought the show back at the end of the season," Ruffin re-called. To regain control of his destiny, Beatty apparently signed a \$50,000



note with Concello. It proved to be a serious misstep on the acclaimed trainer's part, since, among other things, Beatty was left holding the bag for hefty winter quarters expenses.

In the meantime, John Ringling North fired three of Concello's former lieutenants—McCloskey, Kernan and concessions manager Willis Lawson on August 4 while the Big One was in St. Paul. Prop boss Bob Reynolds quit in protest. In a show of solidarity, most of the 40 prop workers walked out during the night performance, leaving performers to fend for themselves. Though North was mostly noncommittal, Michael Burke—McCloskey's replacement—filled in the blanks for the AP. "Mr. North didn't want any organized rackets on the lots," said Burke. "We're interested in a good show only—not a floating crap game."

McCloskey would take a small measure of revenge on the Ringling show after his group took over the Beatty show the following year.

Desperate for seed money to launch his smaller show's 1956 tour, Beatty turned to McCloskey and Kernan, who in return for the concessions privilege floated Beatty a \$16,000 loan. It's not likely that the two new investors were aware of Concello's first mortgage. (The McCloskey-Kernan deal precipitated a breach-of-contract suit against Beatty by the Jacob brothers, who operated National Concessions out of Buffalo, New York. Beatty insisted the Jacobs contract had expired at the end of 1955.)

Still scrambling for additional funding, Beatty sought out Frank Walter's widow. In late 1955 or early 1956, "he left the show for a few days and flew to Houston," Ruffin recalled. "When he needed money, he could always go to Mrs. Walter and get it."

This time, the owner apparently came away empty-handed. Ruffin theorized that Mrs. Walter may have been miffed that Beatty did not repay her after he regained control of his show from Concello. The Houston socialite also may have been disillusioned on learning that some of her late husband's wagons were destroyed by a fire at the winter quarters gymnasium in late 1955.

"I was there when that building caught on fire on a Friday night," Ruffin recalled. "Some of the working men were using five-gallon lacquer buckets to paint (the wagons) and to make fires so they could keep warm. The gymnasium had a wooden floor. I guess somebody left on Friday, and the floor caught fire and burned up all those beautiful wagons."

As a result of the fire, the train crew had one less cat wagon to load and Beatty was forced to downsize his act. "He got rid of a lot of cats that [1955-56] winter," Ruffin said. "He cut out the deadheads; they were too old, you know, for performance." The aged beasts were simply "put down, put to sleep." In past years, Beatty had donated surplus cats to zoos, which sometimes declined, either because they were overstocked or because they didn't want to be stuck with one of Beatty's killer lions.

In the processing of culling older cats at winter quarters, Beatty assigned Junior to break in a group of recent arrivals. "That's how I got started as a wild animal trainer," Ruffin disclosed.

The 17-year-old's results were evident from a *Headlight* reporter's visit to the circus compound, published on November 22, 1955. "Beatty took with his animal act to

New Orleans last week four disciplined, smooth performing young tigers that arrived from India, snarling and bitter, only two months ago. . . .

"Beatty said he considers tigers ready to 'mix' (with lions) after one month's training," wrote Veda N. Conner after spending hours touring the winter quarters. "'Lions' and tigers' best years," Beatty said, 'are from one to five years of age. . . . They get more and more dangerous the longer they are worked.' Regardless of training or treatment, Beatty said, 'these animals never become dependable or predictable. They are wild animals and they stay wild.'"

In the meantime, the circus owner had committed to beefing up the performance for the coming season. On November 17, 1955, the *Headlight* pictured Beatty at the fairgrounds with his new co-star, Duncan Renaldo, better known to millions of TV viewers as the Cisco Kid

Following the photo session with his new co-star, the trainer left for the New Orleans engagement, produced by Tom Pack.

On February 2, 1956, the *Headlight* reported that "Clyde Beatty left Wednesday, Jan. 25, with his animal acts, including the big lion and tiger act, trained horses and ponies, for a five-week tour.

"The act will open the Detroit, Mich., Shriner's circus, remain there for two weeks, then will show for one week each at Cleveland, Ohio, and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.

"The entire show here at winter quarters is being painted and redecorated for the coming summer season. E. L. Burnette, Los Angeles Ringling Brothers artist, is painting everything from cages and wagons to the train with the highly skilled scrolls and old-time decorations expected by circus fans."

On the surface at least, prospects seemed favorable for a successful 1956 tour. Little did the owner know that in less than six months, he would be struggling for the survival of the Clyde Beatty Circus.

Next: Circus on the ropes.

The following inventory of the 1954 Clyde Beatty Circus appeared in the June 26, 1956 *Deming Graphic* as part of a legal notice filed by Arthur Concello against Beatty and his circus:

Circus Equipment-Trucks, Tractors, Trailer Wagons, Cars, Etc.

Chevrolet-Van Truck-Advance 1951
 Ford-8-Panel Truck-Advance 1949
 Ford-6-Pick Up Truck Advance 1949
 Ford-6--Pick Up Trk. Advance 1949
 G.M.C. Truck Water Wagon 1952
 G.M.C. Truck Water Wagon 1952
 G.M.C. Truck-Stake Driver 1952
 Case Tractor-Industrial 1954
 Case Tractor-Industrial 1954
 Case Tractor-Industrial 1954
 30-Cookhouse Wagon 14' Lewis-1946
 31-Cookhouse Supply Wag. Lewls 1946
 40-Concession Wagon Lewls 1946
 41-Sideshow Wagon - Lewis 1946
 42-Llghtplant Wagon Fabric 1948
 43-Lights-Supply Wagon Homemade 1946
 44-Red Ticket Wagon Lewis 1946

45-White Ticket Wagon Springfield 1945
 46-Menagerie Wagon Lewis 1946
 80-Arena Prop Wagon Homemade 1946
 81-Prop Wagon Lewis 1946
 82-Trunk Wagon Lewis 1946
 83-Band Wagon Lewis 1946
 84-Wardrobe Lewis 1946
 85-Prop Wagon Lewis 1946
 90-Canvas Wagon. Lewis 1946
 91-Pole Wagon - Lewis 1946
 92-Stringer Wagon Lewis 1946
 93-Bible Plank Wagon Lewis 1946
 94-Bible Plank Wagon Lewis 1946
 95-Jack Wagon Lewis 1946
 96-Stake & Chain Wagon 1946
 97-Chair Wagon Lewis 1946
 98-Chair-Meat Wagon Lewis 1946
 7-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 8-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 9-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 10-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 11-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 12-Small Cage Wagon Lewis 1946
 3-Large Cage Wagon Homemade 1946
 4-Large Cage Wagon Homemade 1946
 5-Large Cage Wagon Homemade 1946
 6-Large Cage Wagon Homemade 1946
 Toilet Trailer-Westcoast 1943
 House Trailer-Advance Rollaway 1946
 Chevrolet Tractor-Cab Over 1952
 Auto Carrier-Whithead & Kales 1946

Circus Equipment-Railroad Train

51 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 52 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 53 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 54 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 55 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 56 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 57 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 58 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 59 Flat Car-Wagon Chocks-Steel Plates
 1 Sleeper Pullman-Private Car-Bunks, Bedding, Kitchen
 1 Sleeper Pullman-Bedding, Mattresses-light plant
 1 Sleeper Pullman-Bedding, Mattresses-light plant
 1 Stock Car-Stalls, Equipment
 4 sets of Loading Runs
 1 Diesel Light Plant for loading
 Track Jack, Misc. Tools, Cable, Blocks, Etc.

Inventory of Tents, Equipment, Etc.

1 Big Top complete size 140' Round with Three 50' Middles, with all poles, Rigging, Stakes, Rope Cable Etc. New in 1954. With Sidewall and extra wall.
 1 Used Big Top 1952 size 140; with Three 50' Middles. No sidewall.
 1 Marquee complete with curtain, poles, railing.
 1 Menagerie Top, 70' Dia. With Four 30' Middles, complete with poles and stakes and sidewall.
 1 Side Show Top 60' with two 30' Middles complete with quarter poles, side poles, 3 center poles, stakes and diapers for canvas.
 1 Side Show Marquee with poles, pipe and chain. 1 Ban-

ner Line,

13 Poles (2 Pes. each) stake, rigging and Banners, Flags.

1 Bally Platform, 2 Tickets Boxes, 10 Stages with curtains, back drops, pipes and ladders.

1 Dressing Room curtains, and 1 blow-off curtain.

1 Grandstand with 23 Lengths Reserved Section, Stringers & Jacks.

1 General Admission stand with 27 Lengths Blue seats, Jacks, Approximately 2300 Chairs for Grand Stand

3 Sets Ring Curbs complete

1 Steel Arena with Chute and Animal Props.

3 Crane Bars with Rigging

16 Swinging Ladders.

6 Elephant Tubs and 2 Elephant Walks.

1 Complete set Seat Curtains with Railing.

1 Set Exit Curtains.

Circus Animals

6 Large Elephants-Syd, Babe, Anna Mae, Cora, Inez, Haddie.

3 Small Elephants-Susie, Pee Wee, Dianne.

6 Camels.

6 Llamas.

13 Lions.

4 Tigers.

13 Horses.

8 Shetland Ponies.

2 Leopards.

1 Puma-Cougar.

1 Bear-Himalyan-Sun Bear.

1 Wolverine.

2 Cota Mundis.

1 Porcupine.

11 Monkeys.

3 McCaws.

Congratulations

The Circus Historical Society turned 70 last year. Our great organization wishes thank you its members for its continued success and to recognize your longevity to the CHS.

Members for 50 years or more!

Fred D. Pfening Jr., Princeton University, Herbie Head, Mrs. Mary Hardin Morrissey, Wilbur Porter, Paul Horsman, William Watson, Malcolm D. McMaster, Bill Biggerstaff, Pete Pepke, Shelburne Museum, Richard Reynolds III, Lt. Col. Frank Dawson Robie, Edward O'Korn, John Zwiefel, Dave Price, Kent Ghirard, Jack Painter, James Waynick, Robert Treat, Robert/Pauline MacDougall, Dennis Watson, John Buthman, Bob Goldsack, Kurt Seastrand Jr., Charles Perry, Howard Tibbals, Allan Bratton, Douglas Lyon, Dr. Sidney E. Brown, Richard Hamrick Jr., Jim Kieffer, David Reddy, Warren Langlois, Lowell Tuckwiller, Norman H. Pike, Richard Deptula, Paul Ingrassia, William Rhodes, Charles Barrett, Tom Dunwoody, and Walter Heist Jr.

The Book of Wonders

**Written By Charles Ringling
Dedicated to Fred Warrell**

Charles Ringling wrote the following memo over the winter of 1921-1922 to Fred J. Warrell, a Ringling-Barnum executive. In it Ringling enumerated the work to be done to the show's physical plant and performance before the start of the 1922 season. This remarkable document demonstrates Ringling's intimate and comprehensive knowledge of his circus. Of particularly note is his antipathy to the use of tractors to haul wagons to and from the lot.

Ringling died on December 3, 1926 at his home in Sarasota. Warrell died of a stroke on September 14, 1930 while en route on the Sells-Floto Circus train between Charlotte and Winston Salem, North Carolina. At the time he was the assistant manager of the show, then owned by John Ringling. He was sixty years old.

The manuscript, on blue print paper, was shown to CHS member John Lloyd by Michael Warrell, the great-grandson of Fred Warrell. Up to that time the Warrell family was completely unaware of their ancestor's importance in the circus business. Lloyd presented this treatise at the 2009 Circus Historical Society Convention in Milwaukee. Michael Warrell was in attendance.

Compiled by Chas. Kannely
Drawings by Sosman and Landis
[Redrawn by Brian Doan]
TIME OF ACTION—WINTER OF 1921
PERIOD—FUTURE
SCENE OF ACTION—WINTERQUARTERS BRIDGEPORT
HISTORICAL FOUNDATION—TRADITIONS O' THE
CIRCUS
OBJECT OF THE BOOK—TO WILE AWAY THE IDLE
WINTER HOURS
SUGGESTION—GET UP EARLY AND STAY UP LATE
AND THUS DOTH IDLENESS
MAKE SLOTHS OF US ALL

SUGGESTIONS FOR 1922

Add second Side Show or pit show, one wagon to haul entire outfit excepting Delco lighting plant, 3 K.W.



Charles Ringling. All photos are from the Pfening Archives.

It might be necessary to make parade. Look over parade wardrobe loaded in wagon left in Bridgeport in 1921. Wardrobe to be loaded and ready in the spring if needed. Omit one air calliope. Provide new gas engine and blower to operate band calliope (portable). Omit Ele-

phant Tusk float; add in place of same, build a large float with rack that will carry one ring curb.

Add two light floats. These floats to be arranged large enough to carry Spader Johnson's auto, the Spissel outfit, or Mrs. [Ella] Bradna's cart, or some other light matter, to be hauled in tournament by ponies.

Add the Cinderella carriage. This will make six floats in Tournament, including Cinderella carriage which will be loaded in wagon as before for transportation.

Make new boxes for two Side Show wagons, boxes to be 20 ft. long, 6 ft. 5 in. high and 7 ft. 5 in. wide, but the loading space will be about one foot narrower than in 1921 to admit the carved doors and front with electric lights, to be folded on the outside of wagon as per sketch herewith.

Add one Hamburger Steak Wagon, 10 ft. long with very low wheels, drop box but high enough so that hamburger man can stand upright. Build box out over rear wheels, also shelf and sliding glass front. Hamburger wagon not to be run by Candy Department, and to be placed on the Front during the day and to remain on the lot until the show is packed at night. To haul a coffeemaker.

Add two flat cars. One stock car.

Add one coach to be used as combination Lunch Car and sleeping car as explained to Mr. Warrell. Put this car on the last section. Take one of the other sleeping cars out of last section and put it on the third section. This not to be stag car. Lay out this car with people who may be wanted such as ticket sellers, candy butchers, etc., or Wild West people, or both. This to be talked over later.

CAR 84. There has been some bed-bugs in this car. Thoroughly clean and renovate. This car has been varnished so much that the varnish is rough enough to tear clothes; should be rubbed down and oiled. Thoroughly clean and put new linoleum in Bath Room. If necessary, repair ceilings. This car should be thoroughly cleaned and taken care of.

COSTUMES. No new costumes for street parade this year. Much of the ward-robe for tournament will have to be made new and by costumer in New York.

Fred J. Warrell,
general manager.

We will require for the floats four (4) four-horse teams of Shetland ponies with harness and trappings. 16 ponies and harness, besides two that are drawn by horses. Would like fancy harnesses.

On account of the



very good acts on the ends, arrange to equip with electric light boxes on the red pole line so as to light up the round end stages and aerial acts.

BAND. Use uniforms again. Thoroughly clean coats, take off braid and trimmings to re-color if necessary and put back again. There were 28 or 30 costumes made for the band in 1920; there is an under dress of very light yellow which could be dyed deep tan, and the over-dress of blue to be thoroughly cleaned which would be all right for the men carrying palanquins, and men marching. A new hat might be provided with this outfit but the old hat will do.

Cut out two Knox Tractors.

Provide a new dressing tent for Miss Leitzel

Provide a new dressing tent for [Alf] Loyal.

We have eight red dresses made by Henderson-Ames in 1920 for girls, not good enough for the season but could be repaired and then use for extra girls for spectacle in New York. We also have a lot of good new ballet dresses at Bridgeport, about 64 of them that have never been used; they are not pretty but all in good condition and we could use about ten for extra girls in New York.

There are four costumes for mounted ladies, having long pointed hats, with horse covers to match. They were made by Brooks in New York. Could be used by repairing. Colors blue, yellow and black.

There are six red costumes for Mounted Ladies, with horse covers to match. They were made by Brooks in 1920 that can be used by repairing the hats and supplying the white-face pieces that came with the costumes.

There are about 20 clown costumes that can be used by repairing and cleaning.

Five costumes for ladies who rode on Tusk Float are in good condition.

Costumes for King, Queen and Prince for people and horses can be repaired and used.

Costumes for 16 Minuette boys and girls can be repaired and used by supplying new capes and plumes and giving them all a general repairing.

Eight Pumpkin Heads and Suits can be repaired and used again.



Ladies in spec costumes in 1921.

It is not desired to use Ku Klux costumes.

Make elephant howdahs. Use new and novel howdahs and the elephant covers to match. The old type have been seen so much that it has lost interest.

Provide palanquin, light construction, to be carried between two camels, tandem, in tournament.

Two page costumes and fans can be used again.

Banners can be used again.

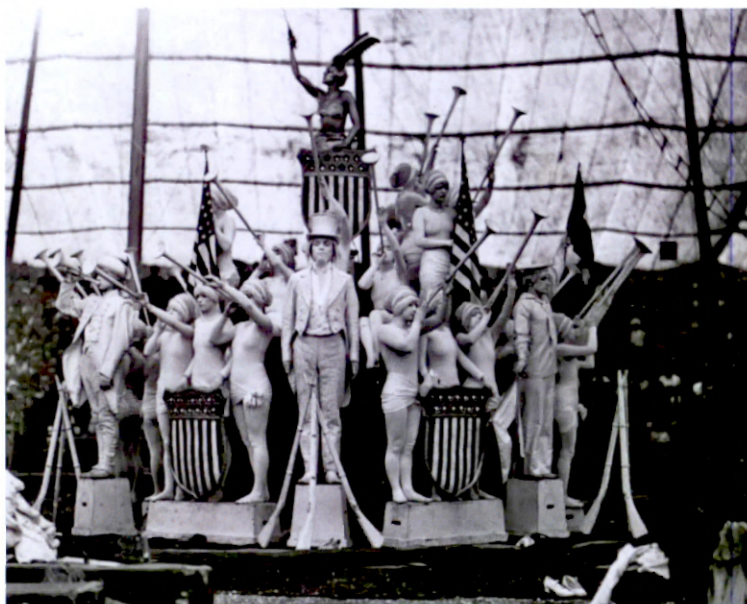
Cinderella costume and Princess costume worn by Mrs. Davenport can be used again.

16 leather trappings for horses can be used again but armor cannot.

There are a number of mounted costumes that can be used in street parade in case parade is to be made??

There are eight costumes made for parade in black and silver by Henderson-Ames in 1920, not used in 1921, which could be used for mounted group by supplying hats. (In tournament)

STATUARY ACT: Make two new hoods in place of the old ones.



Center ring statue act.

George Auger [side show giant] to supply his own costume or uniform which we are to pay for in the spring for giant in tournament.

For the horse and dogs – two posing acts

For the pony posing act by Doris Smith

For the horse posing act by Mrs. Agee provide costumes in tights, all of an attractive design. All white.

Make 32 "bogy man" costumes for clown dance. This is to be white with red lobsters sewed on and a part to go over the head with large eye-holes, just like a shirt with a head covering; to be no longer than to the knees and rather loose in the body.

INSIDE UNIFORMS NEEDED

22 Ticket Sellers. New light suits for road. Garden O K.

27 Animal Men need new coats, pants and caps.

18 Elephant Men need new coats, pants and caps.

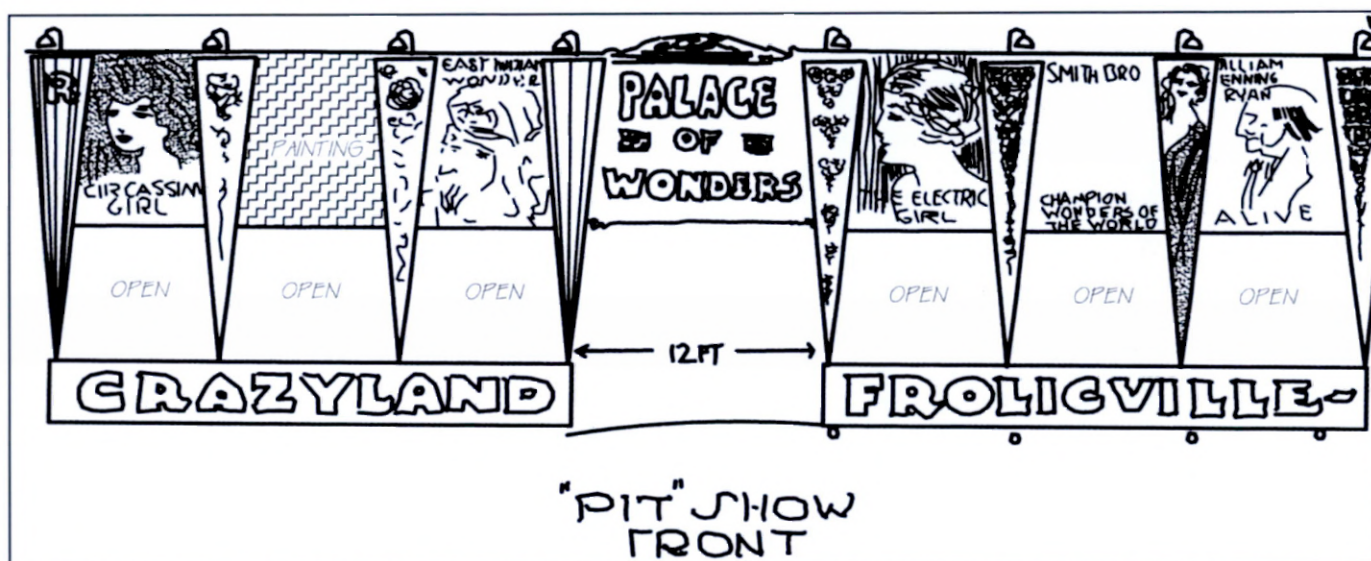
30 Grooms need new coats and pants, and leggings or boots.

6 Jockeys – coats and caps.

25 Ushers need new coats, pants and caps.

18 Object holders need pants and caps.

70 Props for Garden; new coats, pants and caps.



Ringling's notes on Palace of Wonders drawing reads as follows:

Painting poles 17 feet long 1 1/2 inch pipe.

Painting 10 feet long 9 feet high except door painting which is 12 x 9.

Vertical streamers 16 inch top-6 inch bottom-13 feet long.

Two big horizontal streamers each 7 bolts long and 30 inches high.

Goose-neck top to banner poles for electric lights.

Eight paintings, plus entrance curtain.

Vertical streamers mounted at top and bottom on bar of wood designs of pictures on streamers.

4 Bosses need new [Nothing more on this line.]

Statues - 6 new suits and two sets, 4 doz. tights (Consider new type for Horse Statue Acts.)

4 Suits Doormen, Garden.

Have [Adolph] Hess train the sorrel horses to walk on ring curb.

Paint two new folding screen affairs for the sorrel horses, similar to the one first brought over, excepting to make them white with green leaves and red flowers or some such decoration on it. The brick color is too near the color of the horses and of the canvas that surrounds it and there is no contrast. Might make it a marble fence with vines and flowers along the top on frame work, not a limp canvas.

Build one ring curb, same width as the 1921 middle ring; these two will be for the ends. Then build the third ring two inches wider.

Suggest building a fine, new cart for Bradna's act.

SECOND SIDE SHOW OR PIT SHOW

To be loaded on one wagon and everything to be kept as light and small as possible.

Canvas to be 30 x 80, push pole to [p], with a 30 ft. section laced in the middle so that it can be taken out and reduced to 30 x 50. Nine foot side poles.

Five pits. Three of the pits to be 6 x 8, and two of pits to be 8 x 8.

Supply curtains inside and out for pits.

Equipment for this show to include Delco to supply the necessary light for the front and inside. 3 K.W. outfit, blow-

er and calliope.

Entire outfit as to banners, pits and front must be first class, attractive and novel in appearance.

Two Ticket Stands only. One ticket box.

Eight paintings and Doorway painting.

Canvas and Side Wall all khaki with red trimmings.

Outside curtains of the pits red and khaki.

Inside of pits to be various colors as specified later.

The tops of the curtains to be fabricoid [a type of water proof fabric], imitation leather or leather.

Carpet or ground cloth for each pit to be provided.

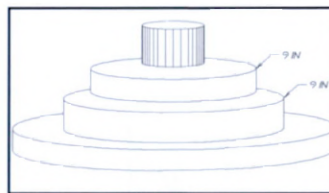
Arrange electric heater for snake pit.

Provide suitable decorations for the interior of the Side Show.

There is to be no extension beyond the side pole on the top so that the side pole is to go in on the outer edge.

Install the 3 K.W. Delco in a little air calliope wagon with the calliope.

Center pedestals for Statue Number should not be made of galvanized iron. When they throw them down on the side they look bad. Should be made of something else. We should have two tiers for Statue Act for the three big groups of girls only.



Center pedestals for statue number.

Provide electric fountains for last picture statue act. Also have cloth cover over revolving

table on which pedestals are placed, dark purple velvet (instead of black) decorated with gold.

See if we have a large wooden cannon at Bridgeport or at Baraboo, used to shoot the clown from. If not, make one. The cannon barrel mounted on wheels and to look like the old-fashioned cannon. To be big enough so that a clown can be put inside and with a shotgun inside that can be fired by pulling string.

Provide a clown dummy to which a parachute is attached and a break-away container to be pulled to peak of tent, and by pulling a string the dummy drops out. [See sketch top left column, next page.]

Repair and paint up the little stage-coach for Casino [midgets] Wild West coach robbery to use in Garden.

(The following letter sent to all clowns except Spriggs and Casinos)

"In order to give you ample time, and so that there may be no misunderstanding, you are advised that it will be required of all clowns to be provided with costumes and makeup for the first riding number as specified below:

Parachute for clown cannon.

"You may exercise your ingenuity and individual taste in the matter of your clown dresses so long as they are good and lend variety and interest. In all costumes you use for the first Riding Number, every clown will be required to have skull-cap, white peaked clown hat (old type) old style clown dress, white, with ornamentation in other colors as you may provide. The face, hands, and neck, including the back of the neck, to be made up white. Face to be lined with colors, the intention being to have the regular old-time clown make-up such as they tell about the children liking."

In the First Riding Number all clowns are to appear in old-



John Agee and Fred Bradna.

meaning 16 on each stage.) Dancing the "Essence," then running to the center ring and finish, going out to dressing room, left hand on shoulder of man preceding, right foot in hand of man following. All dressed in "bogey" costumes, white overthrow. Bogey music. Clowns may enter from a screened-in enclosure or from dress-

ing room.

Suggest possible use of clown giraffes, elephants, etc. Pad dog made up as a lion, breaking through rubber bars of cage, etc. Buy big St. Bernard dog if possible. [Pat] Valdo's two Turks. Stilt band.

SPADER JOHNSON. {automobile. Speech. Sampson, the strong-man. Crazy number. Barber shop. Clown band.

If we could teach Agee to work the horses, ponies and dogs [Sketch of rings below inserted here in manuscript.]



Ponies or horse act as big horse pony and monkey. (Mayer) or 4 seal acts. 6 sorrels & stable first, then with 6 grays. [Agee] Herzog, menage



Horses, ponies and dogs. (Hess) 6 greys and stable. 12 blacks. [Hess] All finish on track including, Agee Hess menage



Camels and ponies. [Foley] or 4 seal acts. 12 Horses [Herzog] Herzog, menage

time make-up. Suggestion: two clowns to be used in each ring to follow the ringmaster and do the various old time stunts.

All ringmasters in riding acts must be dressed in evening dress at night, with silk hat. Afternoon suits for matinees as may be directed.

Alfons to build break-away aeroplane on track. (Blocks, rope, etc. on quarter pole.

Casino's Wild West robbery in Garden.

The old "Essence" with 32 clowns (double line of eight,

In Number One we could use Hess and Herzog menage horses in the ends in this number and finish on the track. If we can provide a horse act to replace the ponies in No. 1, I would prefer to use the ponies in the Seal Number.

Have the horses in the end rings walk on the ring-fence or curb.

Mr. Hess to have two more (green) black horses to break, sorrel horses to break.

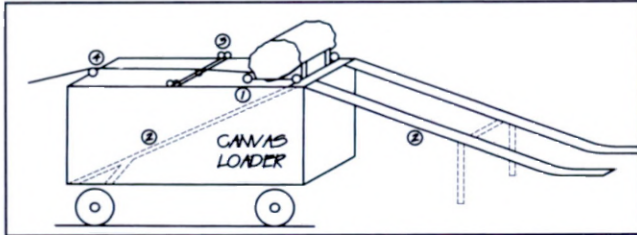
The complete lot in 1922.



[Christian] Schroeder is to work his polar bears and look after them in Winterquarters. If we can buy one additional polar bear to make the number seven he is to train, try to get one.

[Peter] Radtke is to work his old group of lions and look after them. Also we have purchased some young lions which are being shipped to Bridgeport. We also have a two year old lioness. This, if possible, he can break in a group, even though we may not be able to use them next year; and especially, if possible, break the two year old female to do a riding set on a horse as a reserve act.

Mayer has been engaged to assist Mr. Hess in training horses.



Ringling's notes on the canvas loader follows:

1. A simple low wheel car to run up on wagon. The top of side of wagon to have track.
2. Track from ground to top of wagon to load on side of wagon with section on ground so car can be loaded on same.
3. Traveling pulley is on track at back of car as it leaves ground and travels forward when car reaches top.
4. Wheel over which a "pull up" cable runs.
5. Cable to be pulled up by a team.

Arrangement has been made with Mr. [Rudolph] Matthies to go to the Hagenbeck show in Europe where he is to work with the various acts we have purchased during the winter, together with one new man with whom he will arrange on the other side to come back and work two of the groups, one in each number. Mr. Matthies has been authorized to arrange with this new man for the season of 1922 at not to exceed thirty dollars per week. We are to pay the traveling expenses, going and returning. Mr. Hagenbeck is to pay the wages while Mr. Matthies is in Europe, which will be small; we will reimburse Mr. Hagenbeck. I intimated to Matthies that additional compensation would be given him if he did extra good work with the animals; this applies of course to the winter work only.

Provide for the baby hippopotamus and mother. I presume we will leave the one now with the show at home. If the young one cannot be carried safely in the same cage with the mother, for fear of being crushed at night, it might be possible to supply a short, broad cage to carry her in the night time, the short broad cage to be hooked to the tank end of present cage, in which the mother would be carried, so the one tank would do for both. I think they can be carried in one cage by putting the big one in the tank at night, after it is drained out, and the small one on the upper part of the cage, and have a gate to swing between. Possibly none of this will be necessary, and it may be decided to carry them in the cage as it is.

The new animals to be brought from Germany, for which

cage room is to be supplied for the road, will be as follows:

A group of nine polar bears

A group of six tigers (use last season cage for 9 tigers)

A group of six lions

It is intended to combine the six new tigers with the three tigers we now have left and possibly one cage can be utilized for all nine. I think the big cage we have this year for the eight tigers will easily hold the nine.

We may also have Olga's [Celeste] Leopards (this has not been decided upon) to provide wagon for.

In addition to the above groups to be brought from Germany, there will be 15 performing horses with trappings. We may also bring two additional menage horses, but this is not yet decided. But the fifteen horses with trappings are a part of the outfit as above listed. All props and trappings necessary for the various acts will come with the animals.

Much of the TOURNAMENT wardrobe will have to be made entirely new. A complete list of the Tournament and the costumes required will be added hereto later. The blue plush decorative sides with clown heads, etc, also the four horse covers used on this float are decorated in a similar manner, and could be cleaned and used again.

Condition of painting on cages is such that we should not give them a general painting. It seems to me that they can be touched up and varnished. This applies to gears as well as bodies. The closed sides of many of the cages require nothing but cleaning up.

Buy the material that will be used for painting, and pay for it, prior to January 1st. This applies to all supplies for 1922 that can be purchased at this time in all Departments. It will be easy to take the wardrobe lists and get at least an approximate list of the materials wanted for this department and buy them.

[Tom] Lynch has asked for a great many new traces in the harness. We have in Bridgeport almost a complete duplicate of baggage stock harness. It might be a good idea to select good traces out of the harness we have not used, but be sure to replace all parts taken out of this harness by the parts they replace, leaving the extra harness complete, and putting the best traces, etc., in use. Be sure and do this, so we will have harness left on hand instead of odds and ends and junk. I do not think it is necessary to make any new traces. If it is necessary to buy any harness collars at all, they should not be, in my judgment, over 21 inches. We have lots of big collars they can use in the spring if necessary. We have too many big collars.

Where new monograms or letters are used on harness blinds, etc. I would suggest using "R & B" (Ringling & Barnum) not "RB".

I think it would be a good idea to test all the horses this fall to make sure that they are in good health and clean of any trouble.

For painting "BIG SHOW, MAIN ENTRANCE" instead of red and blue, we would like to try black and yellow.

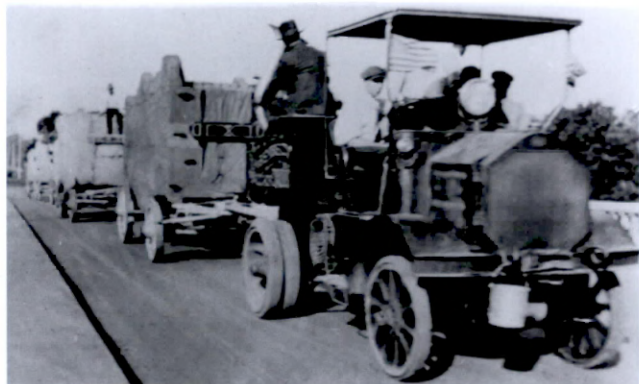
We must arrange immediately on arrival at Bridgeport so that we will have a suitable arrangement for working and training the cat animals. This must be entirely separate from the ring-barn, where the horses will be trained. If it can be arranged to have the five or six cage of animals immediately next to the training place, it should be done.

NOTE: Butler says that a pair of polar bears, priced at \$450

will arrive in San Francisco shortly. I have told him to be on the lookout for them, and if they are under, or about, two years old, to purchase them and send them to Bridgeport. Will give Schroeder a chance to train both of them for the present act. We lost one this summer, so we might train the two bears to make the troupe complete, and have one extra.

TRACTORS

Baggage wagons are being badly wrecked by being hauled by tractors. Tractors go altogether too fast, and wagons are not built to stand moving at 12 to 15 miles an hour. It wears them out and burns up the gears. It would pay us to **ABANDON THE USE OF TRACTORS** altogether while we have no parade. Where three baggage wagons are being hauled at one time, the middle wagon is subjected to the power ahead and from the wagon that is being trailed behind it, and is badly jarred and jolted. A good many of the wagons are wrecked now, and it will not be long before we will need to build a lot of new baggage wagons if we continue to use the tractors. We can haul the show better without them than with them.



A Knox tractor used on Ringling-Barnum in 1921. Same tractor on Barnum & Bailey in 1918.

I have talked the matter of handling the show over with the Boss Hostler and his assistants. They are of the opinion that it would be better to handle the show with stock altogether, with the exception of using the MACK TRUCK. Mr. Lynch thinks it would take 330 head of baggage stock. We now have 311. It would require 20 more horses. We have plenty of harness and collars for them. It would require another stock car, but the two tractors practically take a flat. There are three men on each tractor; we would have three less men with the stock than at present. The Mack tractor would go on the Squadron and haul cages up as now. The cages are not heavy loads and all spring wagons and they would handle all right, but when it comes to handling baggage wagons, anything in them is jerked to pieces, besides the wear and tear on the wagons themselves. In the Cook House wagons the dishes, utensils, paraphernalia, etc. are dis-

placed and thrown about – in fact, this is true of all the loads being hauled by the tractors. There is a good deal of danger going down hills behind the tractors, and in turning corners there is danger. This is true also in coming away from the lots at night on narrow streets. With the tractors, wagons must first be hauled off by the teams and planted on the streets; then they are hauled down to somewhere near the lot, where it is again necessary to hook a team on. I am sure we would be far better off without these two tractors.

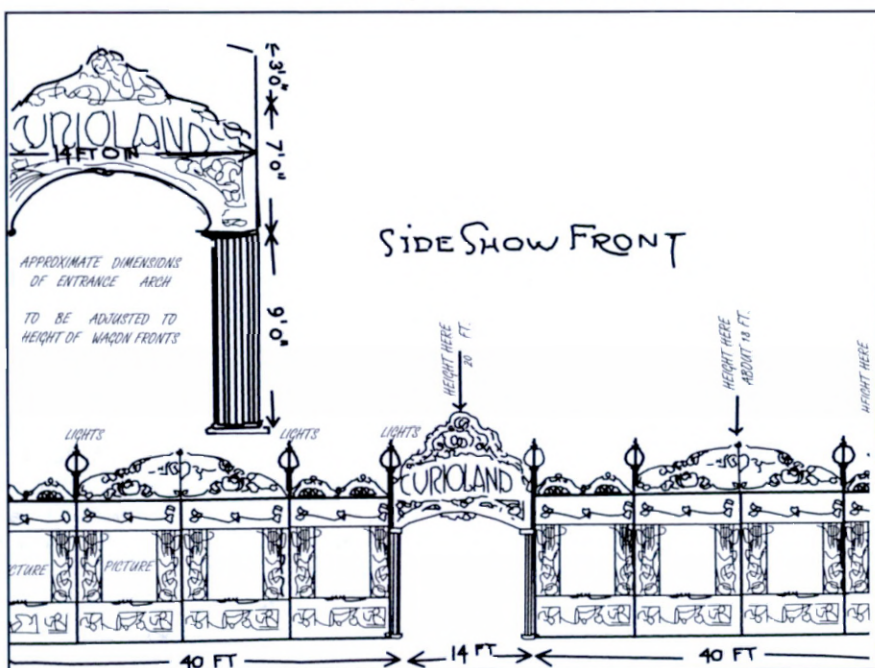
The Mack is a necessity in the day-time for hauling candy-stand supplies, etc. from the train to the lot, or hauling feed back and forth. It also hauls the razor-backs up to their meals and brings up the cages in the morning, but hauling the baggage wagons wrecks them and it is more of a nuisance than a help.

With this little extra work, we would save a great deal of work on the wagons and equipment, and handle our show in far better shape. We would get the show on the lot earlier, because they depend too much on tractors and let the teams stand. I would rather have regular trips arranged for the stock on all wagons; I know it is far better. The last year with the Ringling show [1918], we handled it with 320 horses and made a parade, with no tractors whatever. It is certain that 330 head would handle it, especially with no parade.

Tractors are a big cost, in addition to the expense of damage done to wagons being hauled by tractors. The overhauling of tractors and the up-keep during the summer is a big expense. Re-building and repairing each year for the past several years has cost more than \$5000 a year. The cost of repairing wagons damaged by them is great also.

[Ollie] Webb says he estimates the damage as to Cook House supplies, utensils and food sometimes as much as \$100 a week.

On this drawing Ringling wrote: Provide an attractive side-wall or curtain to go from the arch to the side show tent on either side, Height of pillars supporting the arch.



The loss has been considerable in the breakage of chandeliers every time they get ahold of a wagon.

With tractors there is particularly a delay in the loading of the trains at night. Wagons are loaded out on the street and held there until they get six--that is, three for each tractor--then they take them down to the runs where they are unhooked, a block or two away, and the train team must get them. They now arrive six at one time, whereas if the stock would bring them one at a time, [John] McLachlan would not be obliged to wait until six come on him right in the rush with the other stuff. McLachlan would be away ahead with his loading if we used stock and not the tractors. The same is true in the opposite direction. They wait for these wagons to come off the runs before they start with them. Often the stock would have a number of these wagons on the lot instead of being obliged to wait for them to come at one time. This perhaps is a little broad in its statement, but it illustrates what happens.

If the tractors and Mack trucks require overhauling or rebuilding, I would do this early. If the motors in the two Knox tractors need too much re-building, new parts, etc, I suggest it would be better idea to buy two new motors, and put them in, because these motors are pretty old. I would let Alfons look them over and get his advice on this. I think that Buda motors or Continentals can be purchased and installed at about what it would cost to overhaul the old ones. I am not sure of this. Investigate.

I would by all means CUT OUT THE TWO KNOX TRACTORS. Use only the Mack.

HORSES FOR 1922, NOT CARRYING THE TWO KNOX



Photo of the side show front in 1922.

TRACTORS.

10 eight-horse teams	80
22 six-horse teams	132
20 four-horse teams	80
	292
Train	34
Lot	326
Allowance for cripples	4
	330

Mack truck to pull up cages.

Squadron stock can make three trips in morning.

The BLUE TICKET WAGON is too dark in color to be easily found or seen at a distance. I would paint it a bright yellow.

The sign on the Blue Ticket Wagon (which is the Reserved Seat Wagon) stating prices and that it is the Reserved Seat Wagon, is painted on the door over the ticket window; it is pulled up slanting and it does not show up. A sign should be provided on this wagon similar to the one on the White Ticket Wagon that can be plainly read.

Concerning the SHIFTING CAGES FOR THE ANIMAL ACTS, season of 1921 we have three all different sizes. For 1922, in order that we can handle the groups as we want to, they should all be made one size, namely the size of the largest one we are now using. The present gears, axles, etc., will be all right for this purpose; it will only be necessary to build the one body and lengthen the other.

Concerning the cages to carry these animals in, over the road, etc., I figure that the nine tigers will go in the 1921 tiger wagon, and the nine Polar Bears coming, will go in the 1921 Polar Bear wagon. The Leopards will go in the same cage as in 1921, as also the four lions will go in the cage they were in in 1921. This will make it necessary to provide one cage for seven Polar Bears, as we will try to add one to the present act, and another cage for six lions. These cages to be so they can be opened on both sides for ventilation; perhaps one side only on the top portion of the cage to be opened.

Have John Carreia make one additional top net for big arena to be carried extra, as we would be up against it if anything happened to any of the nets.

Also have Carreia make new nets for the vestibules. Make two end nets same as the one in the center.

While Carreia is making these nets, he might as well make any new nets necessary for the Side Wall of the Big Top.

NO. 3 COOK HOUSE WAGON is the little wagon we made in 1920 for a Night Lunch Wagon. Cut it out, and replace with a 16-foot wagon that will carry a good load.

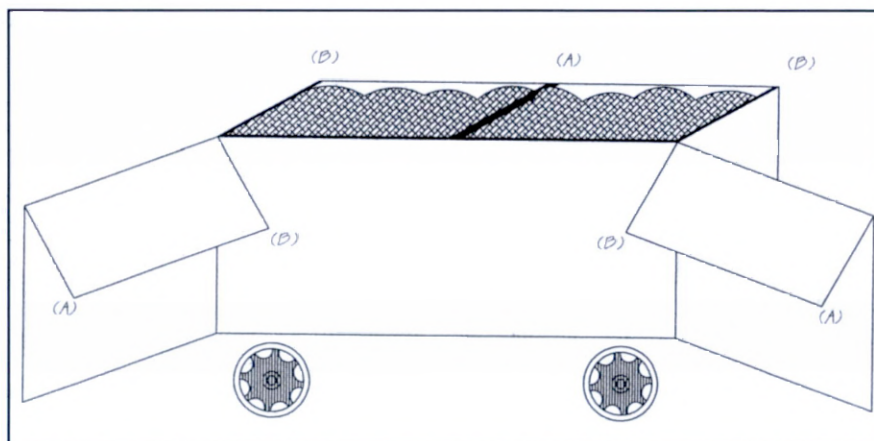
Repair the COMMISSARY WAGON, as it was built of a green material and shrank, so it rains through the sides as well as the roof.

No. 5 COOK HOUSE WAGON has front bolster and front wheels to be replaced, if we can use this body again; otherwise we will require a new body for it.

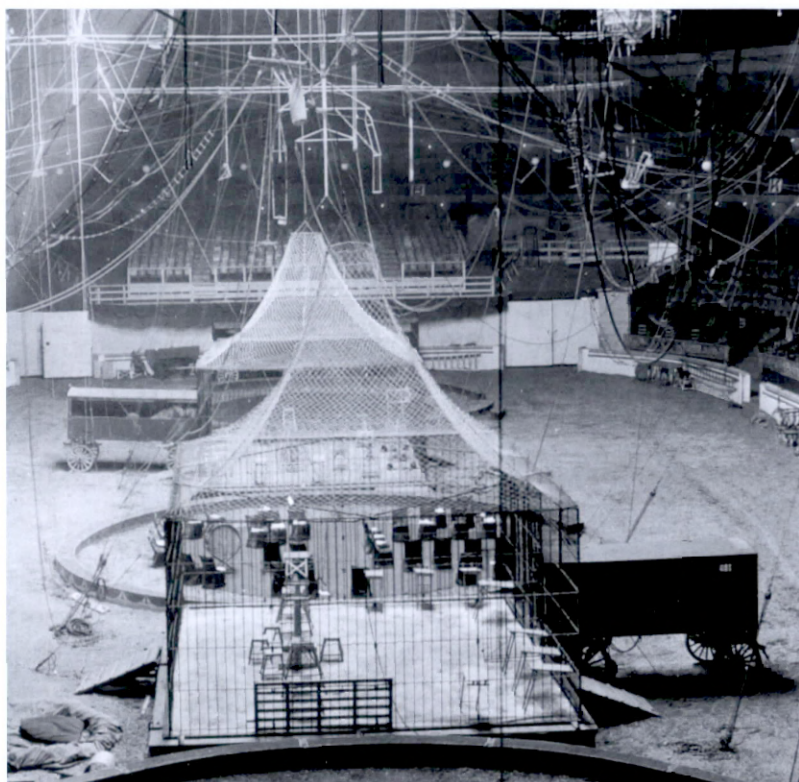
COOK HOUSE WATER TANK is badly rotted and must be replaced. I think this body can be rebuilt OK.

In the Garden I figure on our placing the two animal acts that go in the middle arena in the place in which the lions and tigers were placed in 1921, and in placing behind the bulkhead both acts that will go in the arena at the end; and in placing in that place in which Pallenberg and Olga were last year these two same groups. That would leave one trained animal act to place in the basement, which should be the act that goes in second in the arena nearest the entrance.

In that way acts for the first number can be brought in through tunnels to the Fourth Avenue side arena, and Center



Ringling's idea for side show fronts follows: Side show wagon front. Alternate arrangement for the side panels that swing out from ends of wagon. In this plan the top panels of end sections covers the top of the wagon sections, carrying face to face, and projects the top from damage when loading.



Wild animal arenas in Madison Square Garden.

Arena. The leopards carried in their boxes as last year to the Madison Avenue. By this time, all the Tournament, floats, horses, elephants, etc., will have been gotten out of the way, and the last act can be loaded down stairs and brought up to the Madison Avenue entrance Arena in the second number.

The white pony performed by Doris Smith in posing act is getting old, besides he looks very dinky and insignificant. Roy Rush will have plenty of time to break in an act like the two Ringling show acts of horses and dogs. I think we have the horse already trained but he can easily supply a new act

of this kind which would make a big improvement.

We are adding fifteen trained horses coming from Hagenbeck in March. We do not want to add any stock cars beyond the one for baggage stock. It will be necessary to cull out all horses practically that are carried only for Tournament and hold down the hippodrome and Wild West to our actual requirements, in order to get away with it. This will, however, be easily done by using a number of the trained horses under saddle in the Tournament.

IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT WE ARRANGE SOME SORT OF A CHECK-UP SYSTEM ON OUR REFRESH-

MENT PRIVILEGES. THIS IS A BIG PART OF OUR BUSINESS, AND WE HAVE NO CHECK ON IT, WHATEVER. IT IS RUN WITHOUT RULES OR REGULATIONS, AND THE FINANCIAL LOSS IS TREMENDOUS. I SUGGEST A CASHIER IN THE MENAGERIE, AND A GOOD LIVE MAN THAT CAN BE ON THE TRAIL OF THE BUTCHERS IN THE BIG TOP, AS WELL AS CHECK UP ON OUTSIDE STANDS IN THE MORNING AND ON THE "COME-OUT."

SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN WAGON EQUIPMENT

AND RAILROAD CAR EQUIPMENT.

WAGONS CARRIED IN 1921

TO BE OMITTED IN 1922

ELEPHANT TUSK FLOAT

TWO KNOX TRACTORS

WAGONS TO BE ADDED

ONE "PIT" SHOW WAGON

ONE FLOAT TO CARRY RING-CURB

TWO PONY FLOATS

"CINDERELLA" CARRIAGE LOADED IN A WAGON

HAMBURGER LUNCH WAGON

BABY HIPPO WAGON

CAGE FOR SIX LIONS

CAGE FOR EIGHT POLAR BEARS

NOTE: Increase the size of two shifting cages. Retain the small air calliope in its wagon, in which the 3 K.W. lighting plant will be installed for "Pit" Show.

ADD TWO FLAT CARS

ADD ONE COMBINATION LUNCH AND

SLEEPING CAR

ADD ONE STOCK CAR

ADD TWENTY HEAD OF BAGGAGE STOCK

In 1921 - 92

Cars

Add 2 flat

Add 1 stock

Add 1 coach & lunch 96

3 adv.

99

If tractors were retained the number would be the same because we would not add the stock car and we would add an additional flat car.

The Prince and the Professor

The Story of Two Wild Animal Trainers

By Steve Hyde

Professor George Jacob Keller and Prince El Kigordo. Neither man grew up with an illustrious circus background. Both men were self taught, and built their own homegrown acts. Ironically, both men were born and raised in small towns in central Pennsylvania. Both men set animal training standards, and both men became circus legends. I was fortunate enough to have had close ties with both men, and remembered seeing both of them work. They provided many wonderful memories. The Professor George J. Keller was born in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania in 1897. He graduated from high school there, and attended what is now Bloomsburg University for a period of two years, before finishing his education in art instruction at Columbia University. In 1921, he returned to Bloomsburg to teach art at the college. My late grandmother Laura (Brace) Hyde was

one of his students.

Professor Keller always had an interest in animals. He and his brother would always attend any traveling circus that played at the local fairgrounds. Around the age of seven, Keller and his brother Charles put together their own little show, billing it as The Keller Brothers Wild West



George Keller and the Prince.

Circus and Animal Show. They also called it "The Greatest Show in Bloomsburg." My late grandfather Warren Hyde, who was boyhood pals with Keller, rode his pony in the show, which included neighborhood children and their pets. Little did Keller know, this was just a planted seed for things to come.

He would read through the *Billboard*, the show business journal, looking for ads for animals. From one dealer in Texas called the Snake King, Keller purchased a six and a half foot iguana. He put it on display on a small lot in Almedia, Pennsylvania with a banner that read "Chinese



George Keller's big mixed act C-1945. All illustrations from the author.

Dragon." This little show also came complete with a refreshment stand. Because of the Pennsylvania heat in the summer, Keller had to purchase four more Chinese Dragons. It drew good crowds, and received lots of publicity. It was just another step of things to come.

On a Saturday morning in July while enjoying a leisurely breakfast, Keller received a frantic phone call from the local

Another view of Keller around 1945.



railway office. "Hurry, George, Hurry, and bring a truck!"

When he arrived at the train depot, he found a shipping crate that had a note on it that said: "Here Keller. Train This." Inside the crate was a California mountain lion cub producing snarling noises. The shipping label was from a Floyd Taylor, a California newspaperman. He was a former fraternity brother from Columbia University. Floyd was a practical joker who remembered Keller's love of animals and that he always had a pet or two. Keller named the cat Simba. He trained the cub in his garage, and this was the beginning of his second career. After he trained Simba, he sold it to purchase another lion, and then another, and various other animals. Soon he was training five big cats. He had two mountain lions, two leopards, and one African lion. His first career as an art teacher was giving way to his next career.

Keller kept reading the *Billboard*, looking for animals. In 1937 he established The Jungle Farm. It was the real beginning of his career as an exhibitor of wild animals. The farm displayed lions, leopards, bears, lynx cats, ocelots, monkeys, Arctic fox, prairie dogs, white deer, albino porcupine, squirrels, opossums, raccoon, eagle, owls, hawks, vultures, and many other species. As a special attraction, there was a lion-training exhibition. Keller worked his five cats under the title Prof. George J. Keller's Jungle Killers. The zoo was located along current Route 11, the Bloomsburg Berwick Highway. Admission to see the zoo and the cat act was just 15 cents. Offers started to come in for the cat act, and soon Keller was taking the show on the road. His two careers were starting to widen.



A postcard of Keller when he appeared at Disneyland.

The May 1938 *Popular Science Monthly* published an article about Keller titled "Wild Animals Are His Hobby," in which author Edwin Teale said in part: "A few weeks ago I drove over to see him. I found him unpacking a crate which had just arrived from Oregon. It contained a grumbling black bear cub which Keller named Grumpy. Distributed around the yard were sixteen sheds and cages. They held Rajah, an African lion; Satan, an Indian leopard; Lucifer and Lucy, two Rhesus monkeys; Bobby, an Albino raccoon; Tan and Tina,

mountain lions from Nicaragua, as well as eagles and hawks, husky dogs, and even a badger that flattened itself and snarled continually when anyone approached.

"Altogether Keller has more than \$1500 worth of rare birds and animals in his private zoo. He usually buys in the spring, trains them during the summer, and sells them in the fall. He works twice a day, during the summer months, in his twenty-foot steel arena at about eight o'clock in the morning and again at seven in the evening. On Sundays, there are often as many as 150 automobiles parked along the road near his home, and last summer, when he established a Jungle Farm on one of the main highways leading out of Bloomsburg, 17,000 people visited it to watch him in action.

"The greatest excitement occurs during the 'mixed acts.' Right now, Keller is working on a spectacular display in which an African lion, three mountain lions, a bear, and a leopard will perform in the same ring together. They will ride rolling balls, jump through blazing hoops. Balance on pedestals, and ride on a giant seesaw. Working up such an act requires months of intensive training and is divided into four stages.

"The initial step is to get acquainted with each of the animals. Every beast has its own individual characteristics. Keller alone feeds them. For weeks, he studies them and plans the best angle of approach. As a general rule, the members of the cat family, including the lions and tigers, respond only to fear. Dog performers on the other hand, will act to please their master. Keller rates the different animals thus: Cats are the biggest bluffers; dogs are the most intelligent; bears are the most erratic and unpredictable."

Now nearly a full time animal trainer, Keller started to get more and more bookings at fairs, carnivals, and festivals. Then he got his first really big professional engagement at George Hamid's Million Dollar Pier at Atlantic City. One of the professor's feature tricks was the old head in the lion's mouth routine. Actually, one does not put own's own head inside the mouth, of course, but Keller would put his face inside the open jaws of his lion Leo. This trick was taught to Leo in the professor's backyard through trial and time. He also worked as a special attraction for James Strates' Carnival at the great Bloomsburg Fair, right in the professor's backyard.

The 1949-1950 school year was the last one he taught. It was while performing on the television show "Super Circus" in Chicago in front of some seven million television viewers that he resigned his position as head of the art department of the Teachers College in Bloomsburg. It was shortly after this that Keller divorced his wife Eleanor.

The August 17, 1950 *Milwaukee Journal* published the following AP article about Keller. It read in part: "Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. 'Here, Keller, train this.' That message scribbled on a mountain lion's cage started Prof. George J. Keller, art instructor at Bloomsburg Teachers College, on an extra career as a professional wild animal trainer.

"For years, Keller as a hobby trained everything from alley cats to timber wolves. He drove husky dog teams during the winter and residents of this central Pennsylvania city got used to seeing the professor strolling down Main Street with brown bear at his heels. . . .

"Two of his earliest acts featured students and animals. Keller directed stage productions at the college for audiences of grade school youngsters. A timber wolf starred in 'Little Red Riding Hood' and a brown bear played the lead role in 'Goldilocks.'

"The latter performance ended when, after several uneventful rehearsals, Goldilocks walked onto the stage, glanced at the bear and emitted a terrified shriek.

"Since becoming a big cat trainer the professor has dropped the students from his act but twice he has shared the anxiety of Goldilocks.

Keller at the Hagerstown, Maryland Interstate Fair in 1945.

"The first time one of his lions rebelled was during a performance at the Brookfield (N. Y.) state fair. The spotlight was on Leo, a 500 pound African lion. Leo was scheduled to open his mouth and permit George to stick his head inside. But Leo rewrote the script, clamped his teeth on his trainer's head.

"Several thousand spectators gasped as attendants outside the cage cracked whips and fired blank cartridges, but to no avail. Keller struggled with the big cat until he lost consciousness. When his body went limp, Leo dumped him in the center of the ring.

"Keller revived quickly. He returned Leo to the cage and repeated the act, this time without a slip.

"But the trainer believes he was in a tighter spot the first day he stepped into the cage with two black maned lions fresh from the African jungles. One cat sprang at Keller and sent him reeling against the cage bars. The lion bit him on the left arm, tore the flesh on his right shoulder with a typical 'jungle haymaker,' then retreated.

"But the professor, with his fractured arm in a sling and a 19-inch gash on his shoulder, was back in the cage two days later. Toughie, as Keller named the cat, has been a star performer since.

"What's the difference between teaching jungle cats and college students?

"Says Keller: 'Students want to be educated. Lions need to be.'

"'Contrary to general belief,' he adds, 'big cats are never tamed. They are merely trained.'"



The professor was now on the road full time with his act, Keller's Jungle Killers. Shrine circus dates began filling up his calendar. Not being born into a circus family, he was considered an outsider. During an engagement in Dayton, Ohio, for example, he had a humorous run in with Hubert Castle, the great low wire walker. While preparing for his first performance, he opened his wardrobe trunk, and out rolled a lot of elephant manure. There were a lot of laughs at his expense, and Keller guessed the culprit was Castle. He then got a shovel and moved the manure to under Castle's

dressing table. After playing the prank back, Keller was now accepted into the circus family, and he and Castle became very close friends. While working with the Polack Bros. Circus, he met his next wife, Ginny Lowry. They were married inside the cat cage at the Orrin Davenport Grotto Circus in Cleveland in front of an audience of six thousand people.

Keller was also booked at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, for the Disneyland Circus in 1956. He and Ginny loved southern California so much, they bought a home there. One evening the phone rang and it was Al Dobritch, an agent and producer in Chicago. Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey wanted Keller for New York's Madison Square Garden in 1959. Ever since he was a little boy, Keller dreamed of appearing in the Greatest Show On Earth. The contract called for the act to have a total of ten cats. After buying an African lion cub from the Philadelphia Zoo, and another cheetah, the

Kellers rolled into New York City. It was one of the greatest nights in his life, opening night in the Garden.

Keller also appeared with Ringling-Barnum in the Boston Garden in 1959. He made another appearance at Disneyland and played many Shrine dates. He always received lots of publicity, from the time he cast a live bear cub in the college production of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and a wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood." He appeared on television, radio, and in the movies. His act even appeared in a toy circus play set produced by the Marx toy company. His act included African lions, tigers, leopards, mountain lions, jaguars, cheetahs, and a black panther. He was written up in the January 24, 1942 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post* for having at the time the world's only domesticated zebra. His act was billed as playing more Shrine, Grotto and Police circus dates than any other wild animal act.

His performing style set new standards. With no whip, no chair, no blank gun, not even a stick or pole. He would put on a pair of white gloves, and with hand commands and

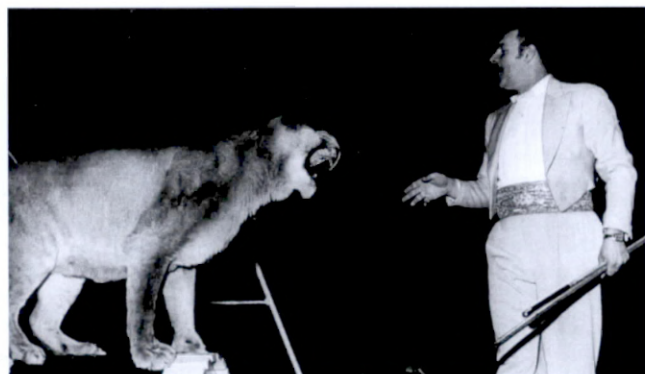
facial expressions control a whole cage of wild cats, always dressed in very sharp military type uniforms. Even his assistants were sharply dressed. My Dad took me to see the Professor's act when it played at Rolling Green Park near Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. One of my prized photos shows my dad, the Professor and me in the cage. I think it was 1958. I still have 8mm movies of that day.

On October 15th, 1960 at a Shrine circus in Corpus Christi, Texas, in front of a crowd of around 3000 people, Keller fell over in the cage, just after getting a lion back up on his seat. The audience thought it was all part of the act. Assistants quickly realized that Keller was stricken. His assistant Bill Scamerhorn got the cats out of the cage and the spotlight was put on an aerial act high above another ring. A quiet voice on the loud speaker asked, "Is there a doctor in the house?" A Dr. T. M. Bailey came down from the audience and examined Keller. He asked for a fire department resuscitator, but it was too late. At intermission that the crowd was informed of his death. His wife Ginny was also in the



The Prince at his compound in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

audience. After his death, his wife managed the act with Keller's assistant taking over his role as cat trainer. He was billed as Captain William Horn and "Keller's Jungle Killers." Al Lapchak, who also worked as one of Keller's boys, came on as main assistant. Capt. Horn worked the act in the same manner as the Professor had. On June 8, 1971, while transporting the cats between engagements in Colorado, there was a terrible accident, killing the animals and Lapchak.



The Prince

Prince El Kigordo, our next homegrown wild animal trainer, had press releases that said he was born in Kenya, Africa. It also said he was a fourth generation wild animal trainer and great white hunter, really exciting stuff. In reality the Prince was born Jared W. Reaser on October 31, 1910 in Buttonwood, Pennsylvania. He grew up and went to school in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. After graduation he took a brief fling at the Dickinson Seminary. Ironically, he got a job with Prof. George Keller as a truck driver. In his book *Here Keller-Train This*, Keller stated, "I once employed a young man to haul my act from one town to another, and I noticed that most of his spare time was spent sitting in front of the arena watching me train new animals, observing and studying my technique. After several years he left me and started an act of his own. Today he has one of the outstanding acts in the country, though its resemblance to my act is so small that you would recognize it only if you knew the background of the trainer."

"The Prince then traveled to Thousand Oaks, California to work and study at the World Wild Animal Compound. He





worked with Mabel Stark and other great west coast trainers.

The Prince on Biller Bros. Circus in 1950.

After soaking up some lion know how, the Prince started looking to purchase some lions. He traveled to South America and bought seven African lions, and had them shipped back to his parent's home in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. That began a period of moving the cats from place to place because of neighbors' objections. As the Prince recalled, "I heard

more about ordinances than a Philadelphia lawyer." He finally purchased a small farm in Mobile, Alabama to house his cats. He owned his own cats, and he designed and built all of his own equipment. His color scheme for the act was green and white. He had green palm trees painted on white pedestals, and his arena was also painted green. (Two prized pieces in my circus collection are a pedestal and a cage seat from the Prince's act. You can see claw marks on both seats).

He toured with Biller Brothers Circus during the 1949, 1950 and 1951 seasons and on Howe's Famous Hippodrome in 1952. His first professional name was Prince Kigor. His act was similar to Keller's, no whip, no blank gun, no sticks or poles, even no gloves. After Biller Brothers, the Prince started to book independent dates. He worked Shrine shows, parks, fairs, Grotto and Police dates. Along with the usual tricks, he had the first cat (a lioness) to roll on a barrel sideways, and had a big male lion named Leo perform on a swing.

While appearing with the Hamid-Morton Circus in Wichita, Kansas, on March 10, 1952, the Prince suffered two broken ribs and a broken hand during his act. He was only able to work his act for two shows.

In July 1953 the Prince purchased a piece of real estate back in Pennsylvania, a two and one-half acre tract along Elimsport Road just outside the South Williamsport borough line. He had plans to build a zoo and a home, along

The semi trailer used on Biller Bros. Circus for the Prince's cats.



with a training compound. He did build a 56 x 56 foot cement block structure to house and train his cats. (His cat compound was about one mile from my house.) From that base of operations, he took his act on the road.

One of his show dates was with the E. K. Fernandez Circus in Honolulu, Hawaii. Also on that date was television star David Nelson with the Flying Viennas, the Albert Rix bears, Herbert Weber, Con Colleano and the Wallendas. He also played the Orrin Davenport Cleveland Grotto, and the West Springfield, Massachusetts Shrine. In March 1960 he signed with Frank Wirth for four dates. Along with the Prince was international illusionist Richardi Jr., trapeze artist Billy Barton, the Flying Zacchins and the Wallendas.

The Prince loved photography as a hobby. During the show and after his act, he took many pictures in the arena. He was also present in 1962 when the Wallendas took their terrible fall in Detroit. In Vancouver, British Columbia in 1960 he was mauled and clawed by a three year old African lion named Caesae. He was rushed to the Vancouver General Hospital where he underwent emergency surgery. Six months later he was back in the arena. A later cat put a hole above his heart about the size of a half dollar.

He decided to retire the act. As the story goes, he sold his cats. Some went to a zoo in Holland.

The Prince led a great and colorful life. Like Keller, he created himself, and his own style of performing. And like Keller, he worked with some of the biggest names in the circus and entertainment business. While living in California, he worked in the movies and television. He was a stunt double for Victor Mature, Clark Gable, and for George Reeves in the Superman television series. He was also featured on the 1950s weekly Saturday morning "Sealtest Big Top" TV show. In his younger years he was a pro boxer. He was called Lefty because of his left hook. With all that and more, it was time for a quiet lifestyle.

He went back into the trucking business for a while. When he finally retired for good, he still had lots of hobbies and interests to keep him busy. He had two homes, one in Williamsport, and one in South Williamsport. I visited him at both places. He would sit and play recordings of circus and band music. Sometimes he would show old 8mm and 16mm films of his act and other acts. One time I repainted his coat-of-arms that he had on the cab doors of his semi. One of those is now in my collection, and is a prized piece. My Dad and I would take the Prince to visit circuses playing our area. He had a lot of family members and friends who would see to his needs.

On Saturday, September 21, 1991 an Evening Of Tribute was held for Prince El Kigordo. It was a wonderful evening sponsored by the local Circus Model Builders. One of my favorite memories is when my Dad and I went to visit the Prince in the hospital. We walked into his room, and there he was sitting up in bed with a stack of 8 x 10 photos, and a few nurses and candy strippers listening to his stories. It was quite a scene.

The Prince passed away on January 13, 2000. His funeral, like his life, drew lots of family and friends. My Dad's and Prince's good friend Rev. Kenneth A. Geise officiated along with the Rev. Kenneth E. Geisewite.

Professor George Keller and Prince El Kigordo were two of a kind. They set animal training standards.

The Moving of a Modern Caravan

By Albert Lee

This article appeared in the May 25, 1895 Harpers Weekly. All illustrations are by W. A. Rogers and appeared in the original article.

Very few of the thousands of people who attend the circus in the comfortable and spacious amphitheatre of the Madison Square Garden realize or appreciate what a great undertaking it really is to furnish such an entertainment. The thoughtful spectators, no doubt, marvel at the army of performers and attendants, and at the vast aggregation of strange human beings and wild beasts gathered from all parts of the world. And if they think along a little further on the same line perhaps they wonder how it is all done, and how it is that these people and beasts have come together; but very few ever take thought of how it is that they all get away so quietly after the season is over.

The people who live in the country are far more likely to marvel at this latter feature, because they see the great caravan arrive one day, and they awake the next to see that it is gone. In the early morning they go down to what was an open field, with the daisies and dandelions adorning it, and behold, like magic, a canvas city. It seems to be fixed, to have become part of the landscape. There is a queer population, there are signs of an immense and peculiar activity, quite apart from any of the activities of the quiet town life. Crowds throng from all the country around. The air is full of shouts and cries, of strange noises, of music from many bands, and of the roars of fierce animals. A fairy lady in glittering tarlatan is balancing herself on a rope, and gliding up

Arriving in a city-detraining the tent-wagons in the early morning.

and down toward the sky, against which so many gay banners are tossing. But the next day the common is deserted, the magic city is gone, and there are no more signs of activity. The open stretch of grass is as it was the week before, except for the trampled sod and the ruined ring. The tents, the animals, the people have disappeared.

How is all this accomplished? How is all this moving done so quietly and so successfully? How are all these wanderings of the great caravan, its apparitions and its vanishings, arranged? The caravan itself is made up of four trains of twenty cars each. Its human population is no less than a thousand persons. There are hundreds of animals, wild and domestic; there are huge houses of canvas to be set up and taken down at every stop. Here is a mobilization like that of an army, only much more complex, because an army is made up of just four very simple elements, men, horses, guns, and baggage, while this show is made up of a score or more of very complex elements. Even the item men being divided into many distinct classes, each class requiring a distinct method of treatment. You cannot expect a high-caste Hindoo to eat and conduct himself like, or even to associate with, a low-caste Hindoo; nor can you expect a Cossack or a Bushman to be like either. And when you come to the animals and birds, the ostrich and the eagle, the jackal and the kangaroo, must be considered individually and not collectively.

Therefore it is just here that you begin to touch upon the problem which confronts the management of a great circus. And at first it seems that such a problem must be unsolvable, that many things after all must go by chance. But the fact is the problem is completely solved, and nothing, not even the breaking of a trace or the posting of a bill on a



country road weeks before the circus comes, goes by chance. The great circus, like all the other great complex enterprises of modern civilization, is a perfectly ordered machine that goes as by clock-work. When one understands one ceases to marvel and beings to admire.

But let us take the organization of all this at the very beginning, and select as the most complex example of a modern caravan "the Greatest Show on Earth." The summer season has just closed, and the circus has returned to its winter quarters at Bridgeport, and the performers, who will not be needed again until the following spring, have been dismissed.

Immediately after the managers have got everything safely put away they set to work upon the route for the following year, for we will take up the machinery of motion first, leaving the circus itself until later. This machinery of motion is known as the "Advance." It makes out the route, and attends to the advertising and all the other preparations for the reception of the circus. In it 126 men are employed, men who do nothing but this work, and in doing it have their time filled all the year round.

The work of making out the route requires an immense amount of knowledge, experience, and foresight. The success of the whole year's venture depends upon the route. Therefore the organizers are gathering information daily from the newspapers as to the various sections of the country through which the circus intends, in a general way, to travel. There is a railway expert who has been with the show many years, and who is familiar with all the railways of the land, the stations along the lines, and the country around each station, down to the very smallest detail. He also knows the routes of all the other circuses during the past season, and is able to form a pretty good idea what their routes will be during the next season.

Driving a stake.



The Kitchen.

The actual route is not made up until late in the spring, but this information, of crop failures, of extensive business disasters, of great strikes, or fires, of sections where there is unusual prosperity, of places where several circuses are to come before their own can possibly get there, is received and filed, and goes toward the making up of the final result. Of course a great factor is the knowledge of the capacities of railroads for carrying the circus, for a circus route means a stopping-place every week day while the circus is out. It also means that there shall be as few unprofitable stops as possible, and that the larger towns and cities shall always be reached on Monday. The managers know pretty well in advance whether they will lose money in a town or not. They cannot give more than a certain number of performances in any one place, so they have to stop at many places where they cannot possibly get enough spectators to pay their expenses. Often they deliberately arrange to show for a whole week in places in each of which they will spend more money than they will take in, but they must show every day, because their expenses are just the same whether they take in any money or not, and it is better to take in only a little than to take in nothing at all.

As an illustration of the kind of knowledge necessary, it may be said that one cannot tell by the population of a place whether it will be a good circus town or not. For instance, Maryville, Missouri, has only 4000 inhabitants, but the circus pays there because there are 80,000 people in the county of which it is the seat. Again, although there are four times that many people in St. Louis, and ten times that many within easy reach of it, the circus loses money there every day after the first two.

The route card shows, for the information of only a few of the most trusted employees, the date and day of the week, the place, the distance to be travelled in reaching that place from the last show town just before, and the railroads over which the circus will pass. The circus has its own cars, and each railroad supplies it with motive power and guarantees a clear road during those early morning hours when the caravan needs to be speeding from one town to another. Here, again, knowledge comes in, for it must be known just how far a railroad is able to carry those four trains in a night. If the route calls for a journey of 150 miles, and the slow railroad could take the circus only 75 miles, the next day's programme, of course, would be dis-

arranged, if not wholly spoilt.

Mr. James A. Bailey, who owns an equal interest with the Barnum estate in the "Greatest Show on Earth," is now at the head of the entire management of the circus, and he attends to every little detail in person. He is always with the show. It is his office, and he is there daily, even while on the road, to attend to his business. His office consists of a large arm-chair, with boxes under each arm and an extension that comes around in front like a desk. In these boxes there are telegraph blanks and writing-paper and envelopes for his use, and books giving the names and addresses of all the agents in advance of the show and of all the representatives in foreign countries. In this chair Mr. Bailey receives the reports of his subordinates and gives his instructions to his men. If a horse loses a shoe, the man in charge of that horse comes to Mr. Bailey and reports. If a wagon is scratched, the driver appears at the chair and takes his instructions as to what shall be done about it. Mr. Bailey knows where every one of his agents is, or ought to be, in every part of the world. Frequently he telegraphs to a man at the foreign city where he should be on that day, and if the agent isn't there the telegram is returned. Then Mr. Bailey finds out why the man wasn't where he should have been. In this way he keeps track of every one in his employ.

When he has taken into account, early in the spring, everything that his long experience and the long experience of his men have taught him, leaving nothing but the weather to chance, and has completed the work of laying out the route, he turns this over to the individual known as the Railway Contractor. This man has two things to do. He has to make contracts for the transportation of the circus itself, and arrangements for excursions for the benefit of the country people who desire to come into town to see the show. He has to be careful in contracting, because if he has to arrange to carry the caravan from one main line to another over a branch on which the circus wishes to make one stop he must guard against making the main-line contracts first. If he did, the management of the branch line would give the show a "squeeze," knowing that transportation over this line was an absolute necessity. In arranging excursions the Railway Contractor has been assisted beforehand by the general layout of the route, the towns having been selected with a view to the railroads that centre there or pass near by. The contractor supplies all railroads with excursion tickets, and the settlement is made afterwards. He also contracts for the transportation of the several advertising cars.

This man goes nearly three months in advance of the show. Six weeks in advance of the caravan comes the Contracting Agent. He stops only one day in each place, and is therefore an exceedingly busy person. He makes all the local contracts for hay and oats and corn and straw, and for livery for the advertising men who will come after him. He rents the exhibition-grounds, and gets the Mayor's license. He secures space for posting bills, and makes contracts with the hotel people. When he has finished he rolls up his bundle of contracts and mails them back to Advertising Car No. 2. Then he goes on to the next town.

Car No. 2 is thirty days ahead of the show, and on board of it is the General Agent. All these advertising cars are gorgeously painted in red and gold, so that everybody knows that the circus is coming. One day before arriving at each

town the General Agent telegraphs to the livery-man with whom the Contracting Agent has made arrangements, and whose contract has already been sent by mail and received by the General Agent in Car No. 2, ordering him to send so many double teams to the railroad station at six o'clock the next morning. At half past four o'clock in the morning, as the car is hurrying along toward the next show town, the bill-posters on board of it get up and make their paste. On reaching the town they hasten to a hotel and get their breakfast, which has already been contracted for, and return as soon as possible to the car, where the teams are in waiting. They put on their overalls, and two men get into each wagon. They take with them a fixed number of posters, and on their return they must account for every one. Their routes have already been laid out for them, and they usually cover from thirty-five to fifty miles of country roads. Each wagon leaves town by a different road and makes a sweep through the neighborhood, returning by another road, so that at the end of the day the fences roundabout are pretty well covered with printed matter. If it is necessary at any point to pay for the privilege of posting bills, the bill-posters give vouchers for the privilege, and these vouchers are redeemed by tickets when the circus comes to town. Nothing is ever paid for in cash. All payments are made in checks, and the stubs are sent back to the Treasurer, who travels with the show.



The harness maker.

Car No. 3 is fourteen days ahead of the show, and carries the lithographs. The same contracts for hotels and livery have been made for the lithograph posters, and they go over the same country roads that were followed by the bill-posters, except that they start in at the end of the road where the bill-posters left off. The object of this is to get posters and lithographs the whole length of these roads, for it sometimes happens that the bill-posters have such long distances to cover that they run short of material. The men in Car No. 3 also distribute lithographs in the shop windows, and give orders for tickets in exchange for these favors. They usually put up from 300 to 500 bills.

Car No. 4 is seven days in advance of the caravan. The men on this car do little work in the towns, but cover the country roads again, and put up lithographs where the rain or weather may have destroyed the work of their predecessors.

sors. The agent on this car sees that the railroad excursions have all been attended to, and in some cases this keeps him very busy, especially in large towns. At Toledo, for instance, there are nineteen railroads coming into the city. Every station along these nineteen railroads must be provided with lithographs and advertisements of the fact that excursions will be run for the benefit of those who desire to see the circus. Therefore, the men on Car No. 4 start out early in the morning on accommodation trains and stop at every station along these railroads. They frequently travel as far as fifty or seventy-five miles from the central town. As in the case of their predecessors, all their reports and stubs are sent back to the Treasurer.

The blacksmith.

The advertising cars never miss a day. They are always on time. They *have* to get there. If there is a blockade, or an accident, or a bridge down, or a landslide, the man in charge of the car must get to the town where he is due the best way he can, even if he has to make a roundabout journey of a hundred miles. He can pay for the extra expense with his check-book, and none of these checks is ever dishonored.

Car No. 1 is called the skirmishing car. It has no regular route, and does not have to be anywhere on any special day. On board of it is the Special Contracting Agent with a few able assistants. Sometimes they are three months ahead of the show, and sometimes they are only twenty-four hours ahead. If they see in the newspapers that some circus is to perform in the same place on the same day, or a few days previous to their own appearance in that town, they hasten to the locality and bill the town in every available spot. They put up big signs telling the people to wait for the "Greatest Show on Earth," and the advantage of this is obvious, for the majority of country people who can only go to one circus are willing to wait a few days longer for what they think will be the best. Sometimes this car makes a jump of fifteen hundred miles. The agent reports to Mr. Bailey by telegraph every day, and frequently gets important instructions from headquarters. The importance of the skirmishing car is shown in the case of a disaster such as that which occurred at Johnstown several years ago. If the circus had been billed to appear there several days after the flood, it would, of course, have been impossible to give any performance in the devastated region. The skirmishing car would have hurried back to the town where the circus was to appear just before going to Johnstown, and from that as a central place would have laid out a new route covering the time that otherwise would have been lost to the circus.

Travelling three days ahead of the show there are two men known as "Outriders." They have a list of all the checks and stubs that have been sent back from the various advertising cars, and they act as inspectors. They examine all the work and see that it has been correctly done. They see that the town has been well billed and they drive around through one or more of the country road circuits to

see that the bill-posters and lithograph-posters have not shirked their work. If they find that there has been any shirking, they report to headquarters, and Mr. Bailey soon calls the delinquents to account. The Outriders also have a list of the shops where the proprietors have agreed to expose lithographs. They go about the streets, and if they don't see a lithograph in the window where it ought to be they write N. G. after this man's name, and when he applies

for his tickets on circus day he meets with a prompt refusal. All their reports are, like the others, sent by mail back to headquarters.

In addition to the Outriders, also three days in advance, is a man who attends to all the purchases of feed. He buys fish for the seals, meat for the animals, milk, bread and vegetables for the performers and laborers, and sees that the contracts of a like nature that have been made by the agents ahead of him are ready to be carried out. He also contracts for enough sawdust to cover the ring.

One day in advance of the show come two men who are known as "Layers-out." They have wide experience in the management of circus people, and they carry with them a list of all the performers, with a statement of their relative rank on the salary list. They know which ones should go to the best hotels and which to the next best. They know where to put the married couples and where to place the bachelors. They thoroughly understand the ethnological question, and they don't put a high-caste Hindoo with a low-caste Hindoo or a Malay. All the performers go to hotels for their meals, as a rule, except the canvas-men, who eat on the grounds; but the arrangements for meals have recently been so much improved that the management finds now that the performers also are beginning to prefer to eat on the grounds. The Layers-out also see that the hay contracts and grain contracts will be filled.



The main tent-pole wagon.

The Boss Canvas-man also travels one day in advance of the circus. He is practically a surveyor. He goes over the ground where the tents are to be erected and sees that everything is all right. Eight acres are usually necessary, but the canvases can be put up on six acres. The Boss Canvas-man knows just what combinations of tents to arrange on a square lot, or a three-cornered lot, or any kind of a crooked lot. He carries with him a lot of iron stakes about three feet long, and, as he paces off the field, he stakes out the locality of each tent. The spikes for the main tent are decorated with red ribbons, for the horse tent they have blue ribbons, for the animal tent, green ribbons, and so on.

Therefore, people who wander out from the town to look at the field where the circus is going to be, frequently see, the night before the circus comes, a lot of little stakes with red and blue ribbons sticking up out of the ground. But there is a watchman there to keep the boys from disturbing the Boss Canvas-man's work.

The first train to arrive in town on the day that the circus is to perform is the canvas train. It carries all the tents loaded in wagons. These wagons are run off the cars, the horses are hitched to them, and they go out to the grounds. There the men unload the canvas, and start in to put up the tents. These laborers are called "razor-backs," because after they have bent over the great rolls of canvas in order to lift them they shout, "Raise your backs!" This work is begun at five o'clock in the morning. The first tent to go up is the cook tent, and then the mess tent, which is a very large affair. There are fifty-five waiters, and they set to work fixing the tables and laying out the dishes. The firemen get the ranges going, and put up iron supports from which are swung great kettles to heat water and make coffee. The ranges are in a wagon twenty feet long, which can be opened on all sides, so that the cooks have plenty of air. There are also sunken dishes surrounded by hot water, on tables made for the purpose, to keep the breakfast warm. While this meal is being prepared the canvas-men are putting up the other tents. It takes them about an hour and three-quarters to do this. Breakfast is served from six to eight o'clock, and the canvas-men get theirs as soon as they are through with their work. The second train to arrive brings the menagerie. The tents are all ready for the cages, which are rolled into position as fast as they can be unloaded. The elephants are used to push the wagons about, and come on the same train. It is said that everything is so carefully arranged that the cages don't vary six inches in their relative positions under the tents in any town for the whole season.

The third train brings the seats for the arena and the gilded wagons for the parade. The fourth train is made up of sleeping cars, and carries the performers. They go to a hotel for their breakfast if they choose, or they can take their breakfast in the mess tent. Then they prepare for the parade, in which every one takes part except the canvas-men.

At half past eleven luncheon is served for everybody connected with the show, and the doors are opened to the public an hour later. The performance begins at two and lasts a couple of hours. During the performance the cooks are at work preparing dinner, which is served at half past four. The evening performance begins at eight. While the audience is looking at what is going on in the ring at the evening performance, the canvas-men are taking down the tents which are not in use and loading them on the train, so that by the time the show is over there is only one tent left standing. As each number on the programme is finished, the animals, or properties, or whatever it may be, are taken to the trains and put where they belong, so that an hour after the

last number the whole caravan is ready to start. Everything has its place on board the cars, which are made at the circus's car-shops in Bridgeport. Every animal has its own particular stall, and is always cared for by the same attendant.

Mr. Bailey's car is attached to the fourth train, and is a very sumptuous affair. It is No. 50 of the circus train. It is said to be one of the finest private cars in the country. There are a bathroom and a piano, and everything that is necessary for comfort.

There are fifteen tents that go to make up the great canvas city. There are the main tent, two horse tents, one wheelwright's tent, two blacksmiths' tents, one barber tent, one menagerie tent, one side-show tent, one dressing tent, one cook tent, one dining tent, one cooks'-galley tent, one band's dressing-room tent, one lunch tent, and one tent for costumes.

No peddlers are allowed upon the circus grounds at any town. There are special detectives that travel with the show, and they send circulars to the chief of police at each place where they intend to stop two days beforehand. If a man follows the circus for two days he is arrested as a suspicious character.



The gas-light fitter.

If by any accident the great circus is delayed a day at a town it usually eats the people out of house and home, as there are over a thousand human beings to be fed. But, of course, this would be an accident. Otherwise the advent of the circus is a very good thing in a business way for any town. It practically leaves all the money that it earns there, with the exception, of course, of the profits, for it not only spends thousands of dollars for its own provisions and other things, but the hundreds of people from the country who come into the town spend fully as much more.

Between March 15th and November 1st the circus visits 190 towns, at all but eight of which they stop only one night. The caravan travels from Quebec to San Antonio, and as far west as Omaha. The same packing and unpacking of tents and baggage are gone through with whether the distance to be travelled is only ten miles, as it is from Minneapolis to St. Paul, or 150 miles, as it frequently is in the Western country.

Next to Mr. Bailey, the Treasurer of the circus is the busiest man of the whole combination. He attends to all the financial matters, and pays all salaries, and does all the banking business in every town where the circus performs. There is deposited in New York \$50,000 as a fund, which is not to be drawn on except in case of necessity. If the show loses money the Treasurer draws on this \$50,000, but as soon as the circus reaches a country where profits begin to accrue again, he pays in the deficit to the fund, and then goes ahead with a separate account for the accumulated gains. When the profits reach \$20,000, two checks of \$10,000 each are drawn; one goes to Mr. Bailey, and the other to the Barnum estate. The profits are not allowed to accumulate. The circus business is done on a cash basis.

More On Phone Promoters

By Mike Straka

"Where's the Elephant?"

Jackie Wilcox was a great promoter and a first class booking agent. She lived in Hot Springs, Arkansas and booked our show into many cities throughout the South. Of course, we played her hometown of Hot Springs. This is where I meet Jackie in 1978. Within ten minutes she had convinced me that I should join the Showman's Association. She said they had a wonderful club that I could visit any time I was in town. I think I mentioned that I lived in Pennsylvania but, Jackie would not take no for an answer. Her closing argument centered on how the association would bury me if I died on the road. This was very comforting to me. I continued my membership for many years. I could see why Bill English wanted Jackie on his team.

It was during this time period that Bill English was booking King Brothers and Sells & Gray Circus. He also maintained our dates and used promoters/agents among the three shows. Jackie might book the circus for the summer and find another sponsor in the town for our show in the Fall.

This particular incident occurred in Ruston, Louisiana. I believe we were presenting Snow White and her seven magical dwarfs that year. As we drove into the civic center, I saw a small committee of men in suits. It turned out to be members of the sponsoring club. It's important to note that the entire show moved with two vehicles. We had a 18 foot straight truck and one passenger van.

The committee chairman introduced everyone and looking at the truck he said, "You got the elephant in there?" I thought it was a joke. As he went on, I quickly figured out that Jackie had mixed up the dates. She had promised them a circus, elephants and all. Without missing a beat I said that the rest of the show would be along shortly.

There were several ways I could have handled this (honesty comes to mind) however, I never do things easily. I made a quick change to the show. Just by chance, we did have an elephant costume on the show. It was pink and very cute. I moved this character to the opening number of the show.

I knew that the sponsors had to be in the lobby selling tickets for the shows opening. Just before the intermission, I noticed the committee walking down the aisle.

I approached them and said "You're late! What's the matter, couldn't you find the show? You missed the elephant. You should have seen him. The trouble it takes to train him and you go and miss him. He was great. It was the best."

After the show, not one member of the club asked me about the

elephant. They all agreed that the show was great for the kids. They did see circus acts. We always managed to work in traditional circus acts to the story line. During the grand ballroom scene in Snow White, several acts were presented to amuse the King.

When I next caught up with Jackie I mentioned my dilemma. She said, "Oh Mike it's all the same. Magic, circus, dwarfs--who can tell the difference."

Interesting Venues and Interesting People

Over a period of 38 years in show business, I've had the pleasure of gracing the stages of many of America's showplaces. From Atlanta's Symphony Hall to the fabulous Orpheum Theater in Phoenix, my wife Roberta and I have been lucky to see em' all.

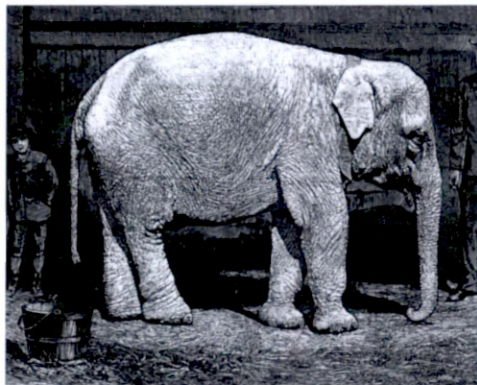
In Wichita, Kansas we played the Century II Civic Center. This building housed three theaters. It was divided like a pie, with our show appearing in the larger space. In addition, two other shows were also presenting on the same day. The building manager pulled me aside during load-in and asked me if I could do him a personal favor. According to the lease, our show was entitled to the stage level dressing rooms. All three theaters shared a common backstage. He asked me if we would mind taking the dressing rooms on the second level. I made a quick joke that it wouldn't bother the circus acts but, I also had New York actors with the troupe. It might bruise their egos to get bumped from the "star" dressing rooms. He thought I was being serious, so much for humor. He looked concerned and said it would be very difficult for this performer as he was disabled. I told him not to worry, we would be OK moving the cast upstairs.

Later that night, Itzhak Perlman came over and thanked me. I'm afraid I didn't know much about violin superstars. I did manage to steal a few minutes from our show and wandered over to the other Theater. I became a big fan in short order.

For seven years, Roberta and I toured with Slim Goodbody. Many of you might remember Slim from his PBS series on good health. He wears a body suit with the organs and bones on it. Now, not all the parts are on the body suit. Somewhere down south, Slim had finished the show and was out in the audience doing a meet and greet with the elementary school kids. One of the kids looked up at Slim and blurted out, "Where's your wee-wee?"

It was on the Slim show that we played an interesting venue. It was the Three Arts Center in Columbus, Georgia. I recall it was a big pink Theater, painted pink on the outside. Inside, the theater had seen better days. We usually had the help of three stage hands for set-up. I had made those arraignments weeks before the start of the tour.

During set-up, Roberta would take charge and direct the stage hands to different tasks. When she meet the guys, she started giving orders and directions. It was a good twenty minutes when Roberta came over to me and asked why there was a police officer standing by the stage door with a shotgun. I laughed and said it was because of union rules. You know how hard it is to get union stage hands to work. (Wait for it.) She also wanted to know why



the guys were wearing orange jump suits. (Wait for it.) I guess she hadn't notice that on the back of the jump suits was the word PRISONER.

I think the best venues were low-cut grass fields that the circus set-up on. Most of them only exist in my mind. Sometimes, Roberta and I will be en route to a date and, I'll shout out "I played that lot." Most of the lots have been developed and are only memories.

Loose Cash

Part of my duties as the road manager was to collect the money due the show. All the settlements ended with me counting cash. No checks were accepted. So, on any given day, I might have to count three to ten thousand dollars.

In addition, I had to count the unsold tickets. The unsold tickets are known as "deadwood." I have never heard a convincing origin for this term. Perhaps it all started with stage coach drivers counting passenger tickets en route to Deadwood, South Dakota. Who knows?

The tickets were easy to count. After several years of practice, I could pick-up a stack of tickets, riffle the ends and do a fast count. I could count a hundred tickets in less than five seconds flat. In fact, I had a standing arrangement with Rex Post, the manager of the Harlem Globetrotters. If my count was off by more than three tickets, I would owe him a dinner. I never did buy Rex a dinner.

The cash count was different. I never had a cash counter. Every bank in America has them but, I never saw one. Every dollar was counted by hand, my hands. Some days the count would take hours.

I went to the local banks each day to transfer money to the home office. This would involve walking into the bank and filling out a wire transfer form. Today, with the drug and money laundering laws, this would be impossible. I tried not to have lots of cash on me. Everything was carried in an old beat-up leather briefcase. It went everywhere with me. If we stopped at a restaurant, it went with me. If we stopped at a roadside rest, it went into the bathroom. It was like the briefcase that follows the President, with the launch codes.

During the weekends, I would collect a lot of cash. I would have three days of settlements in the briefcase. This story concerns a particular weekend. It was the 4th of July weekend. Of course, the banks were closed. So I ended up with close to 20 thousand dollars in my briefcase. Normally, I keep everything in a bank bag but, with so much cash, I ended up filling the briefcase with stacks of bills.

Now I'm a strong believer that our country's independence requires celebrating. In fact, I'm sure I raised a few glasses to toast our freedoms. It may have been more than a few.

Tuesday morning was very foggy. Meteorologically speaking, the morning was very nice. My head was where the fog was. We had an early morning jump to the next town. I checked us out of the mom and pop hotel and headed us down the road.

We had traveled about 30 miles when I decided to stop and get some gas. I was also in need of hot coffee to help lift the fog.

I went to pay for the gas when the panic began. I'm sure everyone has had that feeling that starts in your stomach. It feels like your stomach is in an elevator headed for the ground floor. My mind was reeling as the panic increased. I did not have my briefcase!

I didn't remember much about the trip back to the hotel. I'm sure I broke a few speed limits during the trip.

I pulled into the hotel and ran to the office. The owners were there and they looked like they had seen a ghost. My briefcase was sitting on the check-in counter. They pushed the briefcase toward me and said, "Here take your briefcase. It's all there. We don't want any trouble."

Obviously, they had opened it and saw it was filled with cash. No doubt they thought I was a mobster or a drug dealer. I could see real fear in their eyes. I laughed and told them the story. I wasn't a mobster, just a circus person. I'm not sure this calmed their nerves any.

In thirty years on the road, I never lost or was short any money. I came very close on that particular weekend.

Not so Interesting Venues

Every showman has a collection of rough venues that they have played. I have a big collection so, I'll share a few.

We were scheduled to play the high school in Kenova, West Virginia. Look it up and good luck finding it. This occurred in the late seventies, was well before the days of Mapquest. We had to find the venue by asking around. The police were the best, followed by firemen, but I never ruled out the bum on the street. Hey, they do a lot of walking and know the streets.

I asked where the high school was and, most everyone asked which high school. It seems Kenova had two. I was directed to the one we were scheduled to perform at.

As we pulled up to the building, it was really apparent that the high school was closed. In fact, it had been condemned. The committee showed up and said yes this really was where the show would be. I asked if the building had power. They told me that it had been shut off months ago. Not to worry, they had a generator and would run it. They set-up work lights around the auditorium, you know the yellow ones they sell at Home Depot. We also got two for the stage, our stage lights. During our set-up, pieces of plaster fell from the ceiling onto the stage. The place was falling down around us. I can't imagine that our show came off very well but, the committee was happy that they had saved a few bucks.

As Oliver Hardy said to Stan Laurel, Midland, Texas was another fine mess. Our sponsor was a local "fraternal" club. They had their own building that included a bar and a banquet area. We were to perform in the banquet side. The club manager showed us where to park our trucks and as we entered the building he said, "Don't look."

A half hour before our arrival, Midland experienced an old fashion gully washer. It rained like nobody's business. The rain was over by load-in time, at least outside the club. Inside the club, it was still pouring rain! The club had a flat roof and it had many holes. They put out buckets and trash cans to catch the rain. The club manager told me that it should stop "raining" by show time. I don't think he would have made a good weatherman. His forecast was off by three hours.

It was still raining as we started the show. As I stepped onto the stage, I had a good laugh. The audience was scattered though out the room, huddled under umbrellas.

During the levitation, Roberta was subjected to water boarding. As she floated up, a new leak started over the stage. The water dripped all over her face. When she finished her floating journey, she looked very rough. Her mascara had run, her hair was soaked, she looked like she just came out of a pool.

The audience was enthusiastic with the show. Perhaps they thought it was a production of Dancing Waters.



Promoting the Art of Happiness

An Open Letter to the Circus Historical Society

Dear Circus Historian:

The **Fédération Mondiale du Cirque** was created in 2008 to bring together the global circus community to promote and preserve circus arts and culture. As a circus historian, you are a vital part of the worldwide circus community. Whether you conduct research, take photographs, collect circus artifacts and memorabilia, publish articles in journals, magazines and newspapers, give lectures to community groups, or just patronize your favorite circus, you already are doing important work to preserve the colorful history of the circus and ensure its future.

By working with the Federation, you have an opportunity to do more. You can:

- Become a Friend of the Federation
- Enter the Federation's annual photography contest
- Plan or participate in a World Circus Day event
- Attend a professional meeting on preservation of circus history
- Bring your ideas to the Federation

Urs Pilz
President

Join us in Promoting the Art of Happiness, smile after smile!

The Fédération Mondiale du Cirque

under the patronage of
H.S.H. Princess Stephanie of Monaco

invites **YOU** to join in a worldwide celebration!

Saturday, 17 April 2010

World Circus Day is a special day for families all over the world to celebrate the magic of the circus. Stage a special event, take a kid to a circus, throw a circus party, dress up like a clown, join a circus fans association, or create your own circus, complete with your family pets.

Make the 1st **World Circus Day** a day for the world to remember!



Find a celebration or register an event at:
www.circusfederation.org